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AD NUMBER
AD509875
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LIMITATION CHANGES
TO: Approved for public release, distribution unlimited
FROM: Controlling DoD Organization. Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development [Army], Washington, DC 20310.
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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (10 Jun 70) FOR OT UT 70B015

19 June 1970

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: MG Harris W. Hollis, CG, 25th Infantry Division, Period 15 September 1969 to 2 April 1970 (U)

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1. Reference: AR 1-26, subject, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U) dated 4 November 1966.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of MG Harris W. Hollis, subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
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Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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20 MAY 1970

AVHGC-DST

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report - MG Harris W. Hollis

Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development
Department of the Army
Washington, D. C. 20310

1. Attached are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by MG Harris W. Hollis. The report covers the period 15 September 1969 - 2 April 1970, during which time MG Hollis served as Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division.
2. MG Hollis is recommended as a candidate guest speaker at appropriate service schools and joint colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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2 cy wd HQ, DA

[Signature]
T. D. MURRAY
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 25th Infantry Division
APO San Francisco 96225

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1 April 1970

SUBJECT: Debriefing Report (RCS-CS FOR-74) (U)

Commanding General
United States Army, Vietnam
ATTN: AVHGC-DST
APO San Francisco 96375

Country: Republic of Vietnam
Debrief Report by: Major General Harris W. Hollis
Duty Assignment: Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division
Inclusive Dates: 15 September 1969 - 2 April 1970
Date of Report: 1 April 1970

Forward

This report is rendered pursuant to Army Regulation 1-26 and United States Army Vietnam Regulation 1-3, both entitled, "Senior Officer's Debriefing Program". I have not strictly followed the format outlined in these guides but have departed from it, feeling that if there is any substance in this report of value to others, I could best convey it by a personalized accounting of what I have considered to be significant. There are no great principles espoused herein; there are no profound lessons to be learned, although a number to be "re-learned". Rather, I have attempted simply to describe some of the things that I saw during my period as division commander without trying to cover them in depth, and to tell of some of my reactions to the developing situation as I saw it-and as I was influenced through the guidance and counsel of my superiors in the chain of command. I have made no particular effort to make this a complete accounting; rather I have chosen to treat those aspects that tend simply to give a flavor of the way we looked at our mission; and to highlight how we correspondingly sought to accomplish this mission.

The command of a United States infantry division in combat is no small privilege. I am grateful for the trust conveyed in the mission charged to me as commander of the United States 25th Infantry Division from

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15 September 1969 to 2 April 1970. I appreciate very much, too, the moral support and understanding, generously and unfailingly provided, by my superiors in this theater of war. They have earned fully the abiding respect, loyalty and admiration of the entire company of Tropic Lightning soldiers.

I register, too, a fond appreciation for the officers and men of the Tropic Lightning Division and of the 3rd Brigade or the 9th Infantry Division, with whom we fought. These gallant soldiers have served their country exceedingly well.

The Mission

During this period the division had a threefold task in carrying out the United States policy of Vietnamization of this war: The improvement of those armed forces of the Government of Vietnam which were situated within the area of operational interest; the active, daily cooperation in matters of pacification with the officials and agencies of the Government of Vietnam; and the conduct of military operations, jointly and unilaterally, to rid the area of communist cadre, guerrillas, local force companies, main force and regular communist units which operated or had intruded into the area.

General Considerations, Command Relations and Tactical Outlook

Just prior to the time I arrived, the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, was placed under the operational control of the division. Thus the division's tactical area of interest had become very large in scope, extending approximately 120 kilometers from north to south (from the eastern Cambodian border to the South China Sea) and about 150 kilometers from east to west (from the Cambodian Parrot's Beak to the western edge of the city limits of Saigon), encompassing the provinces of Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, and Long An, and including a small portion of Binh Duong. (See Inclosure 2 - Terrain Analysis.) During the latter part of my tour the Michelin/Trapezoid area was added to, and a portion of northern Tay Ninh Province deleted from, the area of operational interest.* (See Inclosure 3 - Map of Tactical Area of Interest.) During the entire period of my command the division was subordinated to the Commander, II Field Force, Vietnam--Lieutenant General Julian J. Ewell.

*During the month of March 1970, the 2nd Brigade was assigned a separate tactical area of responsibility in Phuoc Tuy Province. Assigned to this force was the 1st Bn, 27th Inf, 4th Bn, 9th Inf, 2nd Bn, 34th Arty, and 1st Bn, 8th Arty.

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With four maneuver brigades operating in so large an area, I found it advantageous to place the assistant division commanders in the operational chain of command. Each was assigned supervision of two brigades for combat operations, work in pacification, and improvement of RVNAF--our threefold mission of Vietnamization. One assistant division commander (Brigadier General David S. Henderson and, later, Brigadier General Michael J. L. Greene) supervised the 1st and 2nd Brigades, and the other (Brigadier General T. J. Camp, Jr.) the 3rd Brigade and the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. Also, each was made responsible for certain functional tasks, while the main burdens of maintenance and supply operations fell on the Commanding Officer, Division Support Command, and the Chief of Staff. One assistant division commander (General Camp) overwatched the Division Artillery, the Support Command and aviation, while the other (General Henderson and then General Greene) looked in on the armored cavalry squadron, The Tropic Lightning Academy, and the divisional engineers. (See Inclosure 1 for a listing of major subordinate commanders.)

During the tenure of my immediate predecessor, and, as a result of his superb leadership, the division had amassed an enviable record in dealing with enemy main force units and in exploiting the heavy firepower available to the division. While these tactics were especially effective prior to August 1969, particularly in the series of big battles around the fire bases, it became rather clear at the beginning of my tour with the division that a fundamental change in our way of looking at the war in our particular area of operations would have to be made. With most of the main force units driven out of the area, we would have to close down quite a number of our fire and patrol bases and go after the local forces, the guerrillas, the commo-liaison agents - out in their operating areas - and make a special effort to cut the communist cadre down so that, when new classes of NVA infiltrators would appear at our borders from the sanctuary, there would be no welcoming party to greet them, nor would there be any "carpet", logistical or otherwise, immediately accessible to them as they attempted to walk in or through our area to set up their bases of operation. I considered this approach to be imperative if we were to really get at the heart of the insurgency and infiltration problem still confronting us at that time. (Also See Inclosure 5 - Sub-Region One (COSVN) Targetting.)

Because the resident enemy had broken down into small groups, the 25th Infantry Division promptly did likewise, seeking to preempt and defeat his infiltration and subversion. While these operations were essentially decentralized in execution, they were rather highly centralized in terms of target acquisition, intelligence and surveillance, and in the provision of aviation and other combat support.

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In this particular environment where intelligence was key, we relied on a complex network of information gathering means, which, along with the more conventional sources, included ground sensors, radars, and "sniffers".* We seeded likely areas with duffel bags (anti-intrusion devices) and swept known routes with radar. The readings of these sophisticated devices were screened and then fed into centrally located operation centers to record the enemy's patterns and hours of movement. As we gathered more information about him we were better able to preempt him. This system led not only to prompt and accurate placement of supporting fires, but also to more profitable planning of ambushes and bushmasters. One note of caution, however. While I have the greatest hopes for the ultimate contributions of these surveillance devices we used, for they have proved singularly successful in their offensive application in Vietnam, I think we would be overly rash if we were to extrapolate too hastily on our experiences to date and adopt wholesale the duffel bag program Army-wide on the basis of the unique parameters in this theater. A lot more ploughing will be required before we can reap the true harvest of its potential. In the meantime, however, the equipment we had, provided a most effective intelligence tool for the commander.

The composite intelligence picture we built up was the basis for our cavalry reconnaissance style of fighting, as opposed to the more conventional infantry method. (Also see Inclosure 6 - Tactical Radar Usage.)

Our tactics were an extension of this intelligence war. Essentially, we planned reconnaissance. We avoided the "set-piece" battle. Given the nature of the environment and a dispersed enemy, we put into practice a basic tactic that I would call "light war". It was fashioned akin to those methods used so successfully in the Mekong Delta by the 9th Infantry Division. These tactics and techniques were pioneered by Lieutenant General (then Major General) Julian J. Ewell when he commanded that division. Our units "danced" all over the division area, "jitterbugging"*** with deftness and speed yet simultaneously maintaining the capability to reinforce.

* I do not mean to down play in any sense the value of our more conventional intelligence sources, in making this statement. We relied heavily, too, on prisoner-of-war and Hoi Chanh information, on agent reports, on special intelligence - in the whole gamut; we stressed this constantly. A "sniffer" is an airborne personnel detector that registers particles arising from human habitation in an area.

** "Jitterbugging" is the military slang for repetitive airmobile insertions in an area suspected of enemy presence. A platoon is usually inserted first. When contact with the enemy is made, additional troops are flown in to seal off and defeat the enemy. A battalion would usually plan to make 12 - 18 insertions to develop contact. If no contact occurred after 30 minutes, another area was tried.

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Most areas for insertion were selected by the brigade or battalion commanders within their own areas of operation, but targets frequently were designated at division level. However, the ultimate success of the reconnaissance on the ground depended largely upon the company commander or platoon leader who directed the operation and made the tactical decisions to establish and develop contact.

Once contact developed, the battalion and frequently the brigade commander would make a rapid assessment. If the enemy appeared to be present in any numbers, prompt action would be taken to "pile on" sufficient forces to "seal" off the enemy before he could slip away. Massive firepower, including artillery, gunships and tactical air, would be employed to defeat the enemy at minimum cost in friendly casualties. Mental flexibility, instant communications, and rapid reaction were critical to our success in these ventures.

The net effect of these operations was to restrict the enemy's movement by day and night, disrupt his communications, uncover his caches, interrupt his supply, fragment his units and take out his guides in increasing numbers. The enemy forces were preempted from massing and were forced back into the Cambodian sanctuaries, to the jungles and away from the populated areas. By continually looking for the enemy we were able to keep him off balance, and deny him the opportunity to mount severe attacks against us, particularly in our base camps and fire bases, and on the people where the potential for taking heavy friendly casualties was ever present. Thus, no major ground attacks were launched at any key target in our area, and the stand-off attacks by fire proved light in comparison with earlier experiences before my tenure. Through these tactics, we disorganized the enemy's usually scrupulous attack planning, imposing heavy personnel losses on him while limiting friendly ones. The enemy units were not only cut down to size but they were gradually losing their experienced leaders, and we continued to keep their feet to the fire.

One measure of the effectiveness of military operations in this counterinsurgency situation has been that of determining how many enemy have been eliminated (rallied, captured, or destroyed) in respect to the number of US soldiers lost in these engagements - we kept track of this. Also, we adds enemy infiltration and subtracts enemy losses to maintain a reasonably clear picture of the enemy's strengths and weaknesses-it is an essential element in the commander's estimate. Little significant local recruiting took place.

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During the period 15 September 1969 to 25 March 1970, 34 enemy soldiers were eliminated (rallied to US forces, were captured or killed in action) for each Tropic Lightning soldier killed in action. During the last half of September and in the month of November these ratios went as high as 152:1 and 53:1, respectively. (See Inclosure 17 - Statistical Summary and also, see Inclosure 10 - The Problems of Mines and Booby Traps.) It might be said with considerable justification that during this period, the 25th Infantry Division was a "reconnaissance" division. We made especial efforts to find the enemy and then react quickly to fix him and defeat him.

How We Helped in Pacification

The division sought to cooperate fully with the officials of the Vietnamese government and with the US advisory staffs within the provinces in the pacification of the countryside. It is my view that our best contribution to pacification is made by the conduct of military operations that lessen the security threat, so that governmental forces can handle the residue of that threat when US combat units are no longer here - leaving to the territorial forces those close-in pacification and security matters that can safely be left primarily to them. In the meantime, the US tactical forces work farther away from the population centers to grind down the enemy and wear him out.

Without security, pacification is ephemeral; without security, it is a "house of cards". Subsidiary to this essential element of pacification are advances in socio-economic and political development activities in which US forces can provide some real assistance, through civic action programs and psychological operations, but which must fundamentally evolve from the people themselves.

Shortly after I arrived in September I attempted to sharpen the division's focus in the pacification fields by publishing a directive to the command in which all unit commanders were assigned additional responsibilities for liaison with province, district, and RVNAF officials. They were tasked with the accomplishments of specified periodic goals, so as to make more effective our military operations to secure the countryside - especially from the local forces, guerrillas and cadres who were intimidating and terrorizing the population. We strengthened the area coordinating council function and also established combined provincial fire support coordination centers in Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, and Long An Provinces - which encompassed GVN and US interests. This not only made the provision of combat support, particularly artillery, most timely when action developed, but also brought

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a broader understanding to all contributing agencies - and enriched our intelligence.

Secondary roads are one key to pacification, with both security and development overtones. As people have increased access to markets and as their confidence grows that governmental forces can hasten to their aid if needed, the climate of stability expands. During the dry season, which began in November 1969, this division programmed the upgrading of more than 360 kilometers of secondary roads - as a part of the II Field Force Vietnam overall program. At the end of my tour, more than half of this had been completed - almost two-thirds. The roads thereby brought into being have improved conditions for more than 300,000 people in the divisional area of interest. Old areas, remote and war torn, have been newly cultivated by the enterprising and increasingly confident population.

In the field of civic actions, we stuck primarily to the high-impact, short-range activities, feeling that the longer term projects could be better undertaken by the growing institutions of the Government of South Vietnam. Whereas in prior years US units were prone to do much of this work themselves, our attitude was one of making our help available and of supporting the initiative of provincial and village officials in those projects they considered most beneficial. These included the usual - school buildings and equipment, public meeting places, dispensaries and maternity houses, hospital buildings, bridges, market places, irrigation canals and ditches, and in many instances the rebuilding of homes damaged as a result of military operations. Our support amounted to providing some equipment and a wide variety of salvage materials and of distributing these through the local village and hamlet officials for use in their most worthy construction projects. This use of their "chain of command" we found especially important to the success of our program, not only in increasing the prestige of the governmental institutions in the eyes of the people, but in exercising their supply channels and in fostering their self-reliance.

We employed our medical skills and capacity to the normal medical aid projects (MEHCAP's), but additionally by conducting more than 9,000 integrated civic action programs (ICAP's). In these latter operations not only were medical people made available to treat the population, but information specialists, intelligence officials, and local government officials combined to find out the problems of pressing concern to the people of the hamlet and the village. Many of these were conducted after 1700 hours; we called them NITECAP's. Their purpose was to reach the farmers themselves, after they had returned from the fields. Simultaneously, they bolstered the

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confidence of hesitant groups that the government was in charge at a time of day tradition left to Viet Cong control. More than 47,200 people received medical treatment during these operations. We secured a significant amount of low-level intelligence during these contacts, intelligence later exploited to neutralize the communists and to corroborate information from other sources.

We also conducted training in basic medical procedures, vehicle driving and maintenance, English language instruction, communications and the like.

We had excellent cooperation from all hands - from the US advisory side and from all provincial officials.

A sound psychological operations (PSYOPS) program is subsumed under any comprehensive pacification plan. This program is designed to foster the goals of the government, strengthen the free institutions, and to convince the enemy that his cause is lost - that he should rally and become a loyal citizen. Thus, we expended much effort toward improving the image of the Government of Vietnam in our PSYOPS operations.

Quite obviously the building of RF/PF compounds, the repair of schools and the treatment of injured Vietnamese have profound political overtones. But in addition, the division provided material resources to all levels of Vietnamese officialdom to assist in bringing the government to the people - in accordance with MACV policies and goals. Combined teams comprised of MACV advisory and division personnel together with Vietnamese officials went out among the people, telling them of the government's concern for them, asking for their loyalty and support. Free movies provided a "come on", literature was distributed, and public address systems gave officials the means to reach larger audiences. These "face-to-face" discussions and personal appeals have been significant in reducing the enemy's effectiveness. Free elections were held in every district in the tactical area of interest, and over 94 percent of the villages now have a recognized functional government; this is indicative of the desire of the people to be involved in their government - or at least of the government's desire to be involved with the people. Moreover, a heavy commitment during this period on the part of the people to participate in the People's Self Defense Force, thereby aligning themselves with the government, is a decided plus factor in this equation.

Divisional resources were likewise used extensively to beam appeals to the enemy. Of the more than 7,500 hours of loudspeaker broadcast missions conducted and 140 million leaflets dropped during the period September 1969 - April 1970, most have been aimed at suspected enemy locations, in

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an attempt to induce him to rally (Chieu Hoi) to the government. The rallier (Hoi Chanh) was often used, voluntarily, to influence his former comrades to rally. Written messages and taped recordings by ralliers were reasonably effective in producing others to rally. Appeals from family members helped many persons break away from the enemy's hold. Of great importance to our tactical operations, of course, was the intelligence we were able to garner from the Hoi Chanh's - the calls to rally were of more than political value.

The division developed a quick-reaction capability to produce limited numbers of leaflets within a few hours after requests were received. Also, Chieu Hoi contact teams were organized for immediate exploitation of Hoi Chanh. The willing Hoi Chanh's tape-recorded appeal could be made and broadcast within minutes. Depending upon the tactical situation the Hoi Chanh might be able to make a timely "live" broadcast to his ex-comrades. This quick-reaction capability was reasonably successful because it brought the appeal to the enemy while he was still suffering under the same conditions under which the original enemy rallied.

An informed, loyal citizenry is an effective line of resistance in combatting the enemy. As the Government of Vietnam has come to realize this more fully, it has increased its efforts in this field. The 25th Infantry Division, in turn, as part of its overall pacification program, assisted, actively, Government forces in this information and psychological effort.

As of 31 March 1970, 94 percent of the population in the divisional tactical area of interest was living under conditions which met or surpassed the standards set in the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES - 70). Pacification is "on the way" in Long An, Ha Tinh and Tay Ninh Provinces. At the present time we have strong province chiefs in the entire region. These officials seem to me to be competent to continue the forward momentum of pacification. They appear to be brave and dynamic officials. Barring some dramatic shift in the overall situation, I foresee continued progress in bringing a better life to the people of this region.

On 3 March 1970, the Government of Vietnam awarded the 25th Infantry Division its Civil Actions Medal, 1st Class, for its contributions to pacification during the period 1 January 1966 to 31 January 1970.

The Matter of Vietnamization

In order to achieve the object of "Vietnamization" - that of encouraging

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and helping Vietnamese forces to take over eventual responsibility for the war - and thus enable the phased withdrawal of US forces from Vietnam, the division actively pursued a "Dong Tien" (Progress Together) Program, promoted by the Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam (Lieutenant General Julian J. Ewell) and the Commanding General, III Corps Tactical Zone (Lieutenant General Do Cao Tri).

This concept called for the close association of designated RVNAF forces with designated US/Free World forces. Detailed and continuous cooperation among units was ordered to: (1) intensify the execution of combined and coordinated operations, quantitatively and qualitatively; (2) advance materially the three major missions: support of pacification, improvement of combat effectiveness of RVNAF and US/Free World units, and maintenance of combat momentum; and (3) increase efficiency in the use of critical combat support and combat service support elements, particularly Army aviation. Each national commander retained his command authority. By and large this program phased into the progressive development of joint training, then combined operations, and terminated finally in independent operations in individually assigned area of operations, usually into more contested regions than before.

Combined operations under the Dong Tien Program increased monthly from September, reaching a peak of 1520 combined company size operations in January. All types of Vietnamese units in the division tactical area of interest participated in these operations, CIDG, PRU,* provincial, and regular forces. Many fire support bases and patrol bases had Vietnamese and US units co-located, conducting operations together. For example, the 7th ARVN Airborne Battalion shared two fire support bases and one patrol base with the 4th Battalion (Mech), 23rd Infantry in Tay Ninh Province. The companies of both battalions fought together for more than two months. All night ambushes during the period were combined, and RF/PF forces often participated. The two battalion headquarters were co-located at FSB Rawlins (10 kilometers east of Tay Ninh City) with a combined staff effort formulating and executing each combat operation. Following this period of intimate association, the 7th ARVN Airborne Battalion moved to a new location and conducted operations independently, with much success. The 49th ARVN Regiment, 25th ARVN Division, and units of the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, also conducted combined operations successfully at the most basic tactical unit levels. These consisted of day and night ambushes, ground reconnaissance, and airmobile operations. The 49th ARVN Regiment,

*Provincial reconnaissance unit.

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now operating independently, has been highly successful in its present tactical area of interest; the 50th and 46th ARVN Regiments are picking up speed.

Use of airlift assets by Vietnamese forces improved significantly with the advent of Dong Tien. Initially, air assets were used primarily by US units. As the Dong Tien Program progressed a higher percentage of aircraft were used for combined operations and operations by Vietnamese forces alone. During February, 30 percent of all assault helicopter hours were used in operations conducted by Vietnamese forces - more than double the amount used in January. The trend continued in March, showing a decrease in US and combined assault helicopter hours and a corresponding increase in Vietnamese use.

We stepped up our training, particularly in combat air operations. Moreover, we conducted extensive training of Vietnamese cadre in the more specialized skills as well as the advanced unit skills. Classes were conducted in demolitions and explosives, ranger operations, sniper training, artillery firing battery procedures, fire direction procedures, ballistic meteorology, and maintenance. These newly-trained cadre started training programs upon return to their units.

One segment of the allied forces available within the 25th Infantry Division's tactical area of interest - the Civilian Irregular Defense Group - deserves a special comment. This force, recruited and led by Vietnamese and US Special Forces detachments, employed an average of 1555 civilian mercenaries. These personnel were deployed in five base camps within Tay Ninh and Hau Nghia provinces. During the period 15 September 1969 to 15 March 1970, an average of 445 of these personnel were employed daily in an offensive role, while 1110 were used for security purposes either in the base camps or in village areas. Their total results during combat operations for this period were 90 enemy captured or killed in action and 16 weapons captured. The efficiency associated with this force in an area of significant enemy infiltration over this period of time, obviously leaves a great deal to be desired. I fully appreciate the problems the Special Forces advisors had with these mercenary units and the foregoing is not intended as a criticism of Special Forces in any sense - I wish to make this clear. The CIDG in this region, in my view, should be converted to territorial forces at the earliest possible time that it is politically feasible to do so. I understand that this is contemplated.

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The Dong Tien Program of Generals Ewell and Tri was a lively one. Whereas at the beginning of the program it was the general tendency for RVNAF commanders to plan and execute battalion "set-piece" operations, preponderantly conducted during daylight hours, the tendency at this point in time, April 1970, is to use the company, and to break down in smaller units when this is indicated, to find the enemy, to operate at night and to be much more aggressive - to seek out the enemy and to deal with him.

Inclosure 18 samples a measure of the quantitative extent of these operations in November 1969. Tabs A through H to Inclosure 18 show the comparative accomplishments of the several forces involved within the area of tactical interest overall and by provinces.

Overall, the results of the Dong Tien Program were excellent. There was a general improvement of all Vietnamese forces in the division tactical area of interest and, as previously indicated, some units had successfully assumed complete responsibility for tactical operations - the ultimate goal of our mission - in some areas.

Summary

During the period 15 September 1969 - 2 April 1970 the momentum of operations - in pacification, RVNAF improvement, and unilateral US combat effort - continued apace. We have offered security and stability to a significant portion of the civilian population. Many factors have influenced this but most noteworthy are the successes of the pacification and Dong Tien programs. Our military forces have inflicted heavy losses on the communists; they can no longer move about anywhere in force without risking detection and elimination. By keeping these forces disorganized and off balance we have gained the time to let government pacification programs take effect. We have been able to keep the channels of commerce open and this has promoted the expansion of capital improvements. Governmental influence within heretofore isolated, independent hamlets is gaining headway rapidly. The military and paramilitary forces of the Republic of Vietnam are being daily strengthened - so are their free institutions. The capability of these forces to defend the republic is becoming clearer each day. Yet, it is the people's high confidence in themselves that will ultimately be necessary to tie down the victory over insurgency - a confidence buoyed by success such as that shown by the forces which have assumed independent control of the dangerous Citadel area. This level of confidence will not be achieved, in my view, if the people come to feel that they are being cut adrift and left to fend for themselves. Assured of continued moral and material support by

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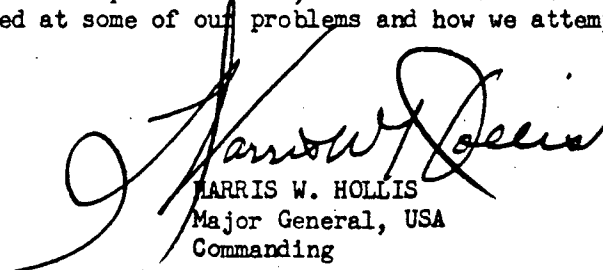
1 April 1970

SUBJECT: Debriefing Report (RCS-CS FOR-74) (U)

the United States and those of her allies who understand the obligations of collective security as well as its benefits, freedom with honor can become a reality to the talented and gracious people of this region.

There are several other matters worthy of brief mention in this report. However, I have elected to treat them in the accompanying inclosures. While many of them were not necessarily unique to the 25th Infantry Division, we did have our special twists, and the inclosures are designed to show how we looked at some of our problems and how we attempted to solve them.

18 Incls
See list following



HARRIS W. HOLLIS
Major General, USA
Commanding

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Task Organization and Major Subordinate Commanders

1. Task Organization (as of 21 March 1970)*

<u>1st Bde</u>	<u>2nd Bde (OPCON II FFV)</u>	<u>3rd Bde</u>
3-22 Inf	1-27 Inf	2-27 Inf (-)
4-23 Inf (M)	B/3-4 Cav	6-31 Inf
2-12 Inf	4-9 Inf	2-14 Inf
1-5 Inf (M)	1-8 Arty (105)(DS)	2-22 Inf (M)
7-11 Arty (105)(DS)	C/65th Engr (DS)	2-77 Arty (105)(DS)
A/65th Engr (DS)	2/F/75th Inf (RGR)(DS)	D/65th Engr (DS)
1/F/75th Inf (RGR)(DS)		3/F/75th Inf (RGR)(DS)

<u>Div Troops</u>	<u>II FFV Arty (GSR)</u>	<u>3rd Bde, 9th Inf Div</u>
F/75th Inf (RGR)(-)	1-27 Arty (155)	2-60 Inf
25th Avn Bn (DS)	A,B(-)/5-42 Arty (155)	5-60 Inf
D/3-4 Cav	B(-),C(-)/2-32 Arty (8") (GS)	2-47 Inf (M)
125th Sig Bn (GS)		E/75th Inf (RGR)(DS)
65th Engr Bn (-)(GS)	<u>DIVARTY</u>	C(-)/5-2 Arty (AW)(SP)
3-4 Cav (-)	3-13 Arty (155/8")	B/3-17 Air Cav
D/2-27 Inf	B/5-2 Arty (AW)(SP)(GS)	2-4 Arty (105)(DS)
		571 Engr (DS)

*2-34 Arm (-) was temporarily OPCON to II FFORCEV.

2. Major Subordinate Commanders

Assistant Division Commander - A	Brigadier General Thomas J. Camp, Jr. (1 May 69 -)
Assistant Division Commander - B	Brigadier General David S. Henderson (1 Aug 69 - 9 Jan 70) Brigadier General Michael J. L. Greene (10 Jan 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 1st Brigade	Colonel John E. Tyler (24 Aug 69 - 24 Jan 70) Colonel Paul J. Mueller, Jr. (25 Jan 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 2nd Brigade	Colonel Homer S. Long, Jr. (27 Jan 69 - 3 Oct 69) Colonel Ennis C. Whitehead, Jr. (1 Oct 69 -)

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Commanding Officer, 3rd Brigade	Colonel William J. Maddox, Jr. (6 Jun 69 - 7 Dec 69) Colonel Olin E. Smith (8 Dec 69 -)
Commanding Officer, DIVARTY	Colonel Daniel D. Stedham (24 Jul 69 - 8 Feb 70) Colonel Harry A. Buzzett (9 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, DISCOM	Colonel John L. Kennedy, Jr. (2 Jun 69 - 18 Nov 69) Colonel Robert Hammerquist (19 Nov 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 725th Maint Bn	LTC Maxie O. Redic, Jr. (6 Feb 69 - 31 Jan 70) LTC Wallace H. Dawson, III (1 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 25th S&T Bn	LTC William R. Strong (14 Feb 69 - 31 Jan 70) LTC Delmos V. Lippard (1 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 25th Med Bn	LTC James E. Dill (1 Jul 69 - 7 Feb 70) LTC Bruce F. LaFollette (8 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 125th Sig Bn	LTC Bernard P. Matthey (3 Feb 69 - 16 Jan 70) LTC William R. Rogers (17 Jan 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 65th Engr Bn	LTC Edward C. Gibson (5 Dec 68 - 21 Nov 69) LTC James L. Trayers (22 Nov 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 25th Avn Bn	LTC Robert R. Gosney (22 Jul 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 4th Bn, 9th Inf	LTC John R. Randolph (15 May 69 - 20 Oct 69) LTC Forest S. Rittgers, Jr. (21 Oct 69 -)

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Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn, 14th Inf	LTC Donald C. Crutchley (12 Sep 69 - 15 Feb 70) LTC Charles W. Norton (16 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 4th Bn (M), 23rd Inf	LTC George E. Taylor (22 Mar 69 - 27 Sep 69) LTC James E. Coggins (28 Sep 69 - 20 Mar 70) Maj Frederick Stanley (21 Mar 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 1st Bn, 27th Inf	LTC William L. Martin (24 Jul 69 - 14 Jan 70) LTC Thomas K. Whitesel (15 Jan 70 - 6 Mar 70) LTC Marvin Rosenstein (7 Mar 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn, 27th Inf	LTC Richard D. Moore (12 Aug 69 - 20 Dec 69) LTC George A. Custer (21 Dec 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 1st Bn (M), 5th Inf	LTC Robert A. Kurek (14 Jun 69 - 9 Oct 69) LTC Frederick C. Delisle (10 Oct 69 - 17 Jan 70) LTC Ted G. Westerman (18 Jan 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf	LTC Burton J. Walrath, Jr. (12 Aug 69 - 31 Jan 70) LTC S. H. Phillips (1 Feb 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn (M), 22nd Inf	LTC Bruce F. Williams (11 Aug 69 - 26 Nov 69) LTC John R. Parker (27 Nov 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 3rd Bn, 22nd Inf	LTC Jefferson K. Rogers (26 Jul 69 - 6 Oct 69) LTC Warren A. Jones (7 Oct 69 - 24 Mar 70) LTC John E. Hazelwood (25 Mar 70 -)

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Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn, 34th Arm	LTC Tommie G. Smith (8 Jun 69 - 30 Nov 69) LTC William Greenberg (1 Dec 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 3rd Sqdn, 4th Cav	LTC Joseph R. Paluh (4 Aug 69 - 27 Nov 69) LTC Corwin A. Mitchell (28 Nov 69-)
Commanding Officer, 1st Bn, 8th Arty	LTC Charles A. Crowe (25 Jun 69 - 2 Jan 70) LTC Richard A. Manion (3 Jan 70 -)
Commanding Officer, 7th Bn, 11th Arty	LTC Carl M. Mott, Jr. (5 Mar 69 - 10 Nov 69) LTC Robert E. Robinson (11 Nov 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty	LTC Joseph C. Butler (24 Apr 69 - 26 Dec 69) LTC Kelvin H. Hunter (27 Dec 69 -)
Commanding Officer, 2nd Bn, 77th Arty	LTC Lewis W. Wright (29 Jun 69 - 27 Jan 70) LTC C. S. Stodter (28 Jan 70 -)

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Terrain Analysis

The 25th Infantry Division Tactical Area of Interest extends 115 kilometers north to south and averages 50 kilometers east to west. In the north it begins at the southern part of War Zone C and extends southward into the upper part of the Mekong Delta. The TAOI includes part of Tay Ninh and Binh Duong Provinces and all of Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces. To the west, the TAOI is bordered by the Cambodian border south to the boundary between the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones.

From a terrain standpoint the area can be divided roughly into three parts. The upper or northern part includes part of Tay Ninh and Binh Duong Provinces and the northeastern part of Hau Nghia Province. This part of the TAOI is a flat to undulating plain, broken only by two prominent relief features-- Nui Ba Den, rising to a height of 986 meters, and a string of three hills in the east commonly referred to as the Razorbacks. There are numerous multi-canopied and single-canopied forests which limit vehicular activity to existing roads and make non-vehicular movement difficult throughout the year. Some of these forests, particularly the Boi Loi and Ho Bo Woods, and the Filhol Plantation, have been cleared or stripped by Rome Flow operations. Brushlands, grasslands, marshes and rubber plantations are scattered throughout much of the open area which is devoted to rice growing. The Michelin Rubber Plantation lies in the eastern portion of Binh Duong Province. During the rice growing season, foot and tracked vehicle operations are restricted by flooded rice paddies; however, when the area dries out, the open areas afford relative ease of movement. Tay Ninh City, seat of the Cao Dai religion, is the major population center with the remainder of the population generally concentrated along National Route 22.

Extending south into Hau Nghia Province the area changes into a flat plain, portions of which are flooded for part of the year. This area contains irrigated rice fields and marshes and includes a former sugar cane and pineapple plantation. The terrain is much more open with only scattered patches of trees. Again, trafficability for tracked vehicles and men on foot ranges from poor in the wet season to fair and good in the dry season. The numerous open areas here provide good landing zones for airmobile operations. Bao Trai, the province capitol, is the largest city in the area. The population is centered along National Route 1 with many villages scattered between this route and the Vam Co Dong River.

Long An Province in the south takes on the characteristics of the Mekong Delta. Large portions of this area are flooded for most of the year, severely restricting tracked vehicle operations. Movement on foot is possible at all times; however, foot disease will invariably result from prolonged foot immersion, and this must be considered when planning tactical operations. The area is generally open, but dense nipa palm grows along the many streams and canals that criss-cross the area,

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offering a place of concealment for the enemy. Tan An is the largest city in the area. There are many villages and hamlets located along the streams and canals throughout the area.

The entire area is drained by three major rivers: the Saigon River on the east and the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay Rivers in the western areas of the sector. The major lines of communication are National Route 22, which runs north-south, and National Route 1 which runs from the Cambodian border southeast into Saigon. These two highways intersect in the central portion of the tactical area of interest. National Route 4 runs southwest from Saigon throughout the southern part of the area down into the River Delta. It is popularly called the People's Road.

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The Enemy's Forces and How They Reacted

Activity in the 25th Infantry Division area during the period 15 September 1969 - 31 March 1970 was marked by a noticeable decrease in enemy offensive actions in comparison to the previous eight months of 1969.

In early September the 1st Infantry Division captured a key document containing the provisions of COSVN Resolution Number 9. This resolution provided a general outline for the VC/NVA 1969-1970 Winter-Spring Campaign and called for fighting in Saigon, the Mekong Delta, and the northern provinces in the III CTZ.

However, instead of a general offensive, as called for by the resolution, the so called Winter-Spring Campaign was characterized by repositioning, reorganization, retraining and little offensive action. The enemy declared his intention to attack fire support bases, patrol bases, and the GVN pacification program in Sub-Regions Two and Three — but did very little of this.

During the month of September 1969, two regiments of the 9 VC/NVA Division left one divisional area of operations and moved into Binh Long Province. This left the communist 88 Regiment to the southwest of Tay Ninh City in Cambodia as the nearest COSVN main force unit to the tactical area of interest.

Meanwhile, other changes took place during the early fall. Most of the COSVN Sub-Region One (SR-1) units, were beset by resupply problems. The 83rd Rear Service Group had great difficulty in resupplying the 101 and 268 Regiments. This situation was made even worse as Allied forces tightened their squeeze. The 101 Regiment moved out of the Trapezoid into the Michelin area in October. The 268 Regiment was forced to divert combat units to food resupply thereby reducing its combat capability.

In November, enemy units in War Zone C underwent a major change. The 88 Regiment, which had been located southwest of Tay Ninh City inside Cambodia, left for the Delta. The 101 D Regiment moved through the northern part of the Division area into Cambodia and from there down into the Delta. The 95C Regiment, a part of the 1st NVA Division, was then resubordinated to the 9th VC/NVA Division. Other enemy main force units within the sub-regions reshuffled but remained generally in their normal areas of operations. Continued pressure by Allied forces, together with attendant resupply problems, caused these sub-regional forces to break down into smaller elements.

Local force units, which had been active in guiding and resupplying main force units during the spring and summer of 1969, were specifically targeted by the maneuver elements of the 25th Infantry Division. We began to make some inroads into the Viet Cong Infrastructure.

The enemy sought to improve his "economy of force" techniques. The Quyet Thang Battalions received sapper training from personnel from the Gia Dinh 4 Battalion in early September. In January the 268 Regiment redesignated its K1 and K3

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Battalions as sapper battalions, retaining the K2 Battalion as an infantry battalion. This redesignation, however, merely recognized an accomplished fact, that two battalions were incapable of fighting with massed forces. The sapper units were more truly guerrilla units rather than groups of elite raiding and infiltrating squads.

Sub-Regions Two and Three units moved to greater dispersion and avoidance of contact.

Enemy activity declined during December. Contacts were scattered, and only small groups were encountered. We had even greater trouble locating the enemy beginning with the new year - and surveillance and target acquisition systems available to the division thereby assumed increased importance. We were forced to improve our techniques of surveillance in order to keep contact.

January 1970 brought no radical change in the situation except for three noteworthy contacts in Tay Ninh Province. An unknown unit was found in early January and soundly defeated on Nui Ba Den, the Black Virgin Mountain, a traditional staging area. One of the Tay Ninh Provincial Battalions, D12, was located east of the Vam Co Dong in mid-January. It suffered heavy losses in a two-day engagement with combined territorial and divisional forces. Then, towards the end of the month, we made contact with elements of the 9 VC/NVA Division in the southern part of War Zone C.

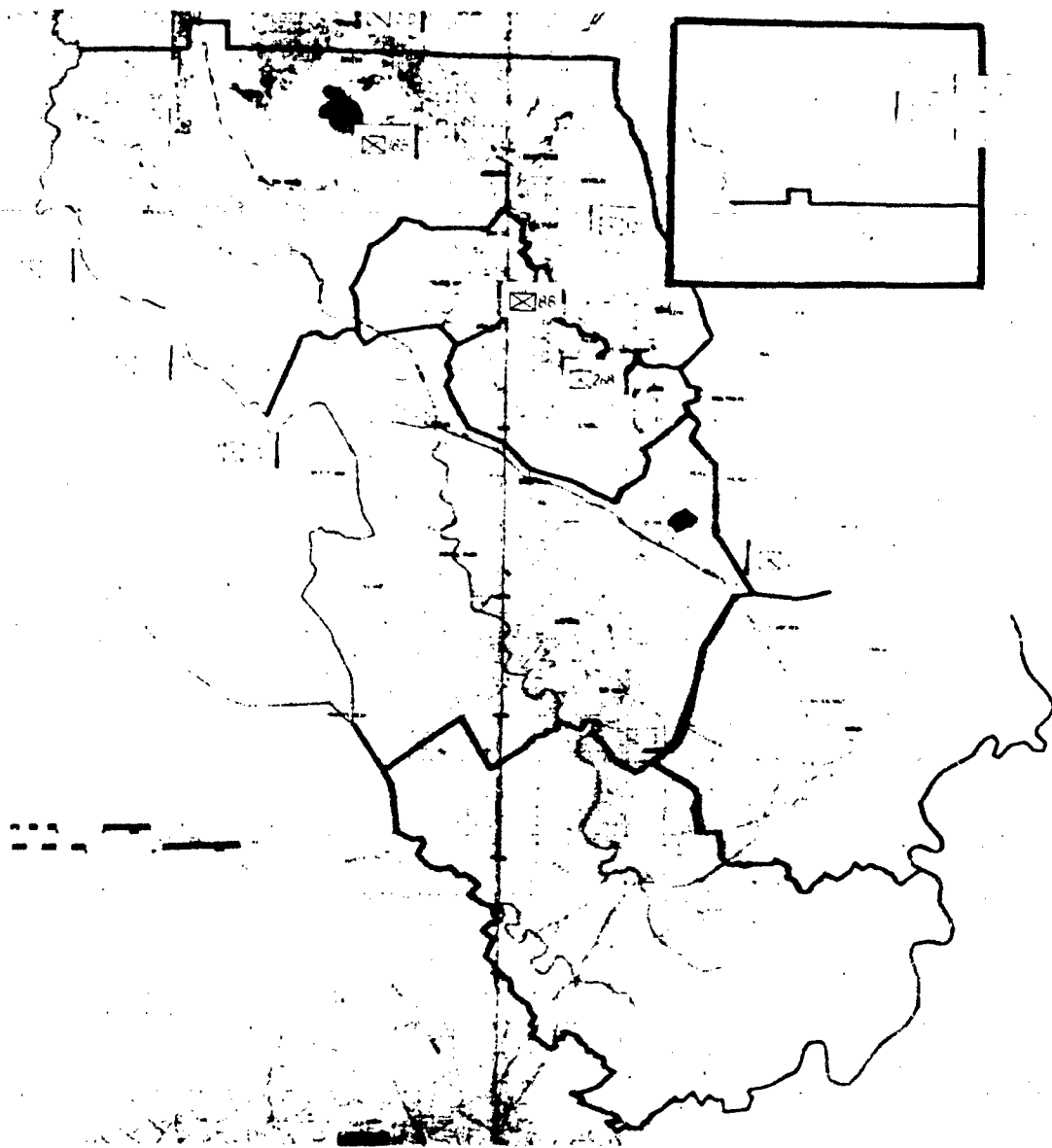
More changes in the enemy situation continued apace. Down in Long An Province the K7 Battalion, 1 NVA Regiment, was formed to provide sapper support to the regiment in January. In Hau Nghia, the 1 and 2 Quyet Thang Battalions, together with the Gia Dinh 4 Sapper Battalion - were reformed into a Quyet Thang "Regiment". We also had indications of a possible amalgamation of the 265 Battalion with the 506 Battalion, and the Dong Phu Battalion with the 508 Battalion in SR-3.

During February and March, enemy activity continued at an all time low level. Although planned "high points" were frequently mentioned by prisoners, raidiers, and in documents, these "high points" either never took place or were of such a minor consequence as to pass almost unnoticed. During March, 1st Brigade elements once again tore into an unidentified enemy that had recently come in to Nui Ba Den. Again the enemy was soundly defeated.

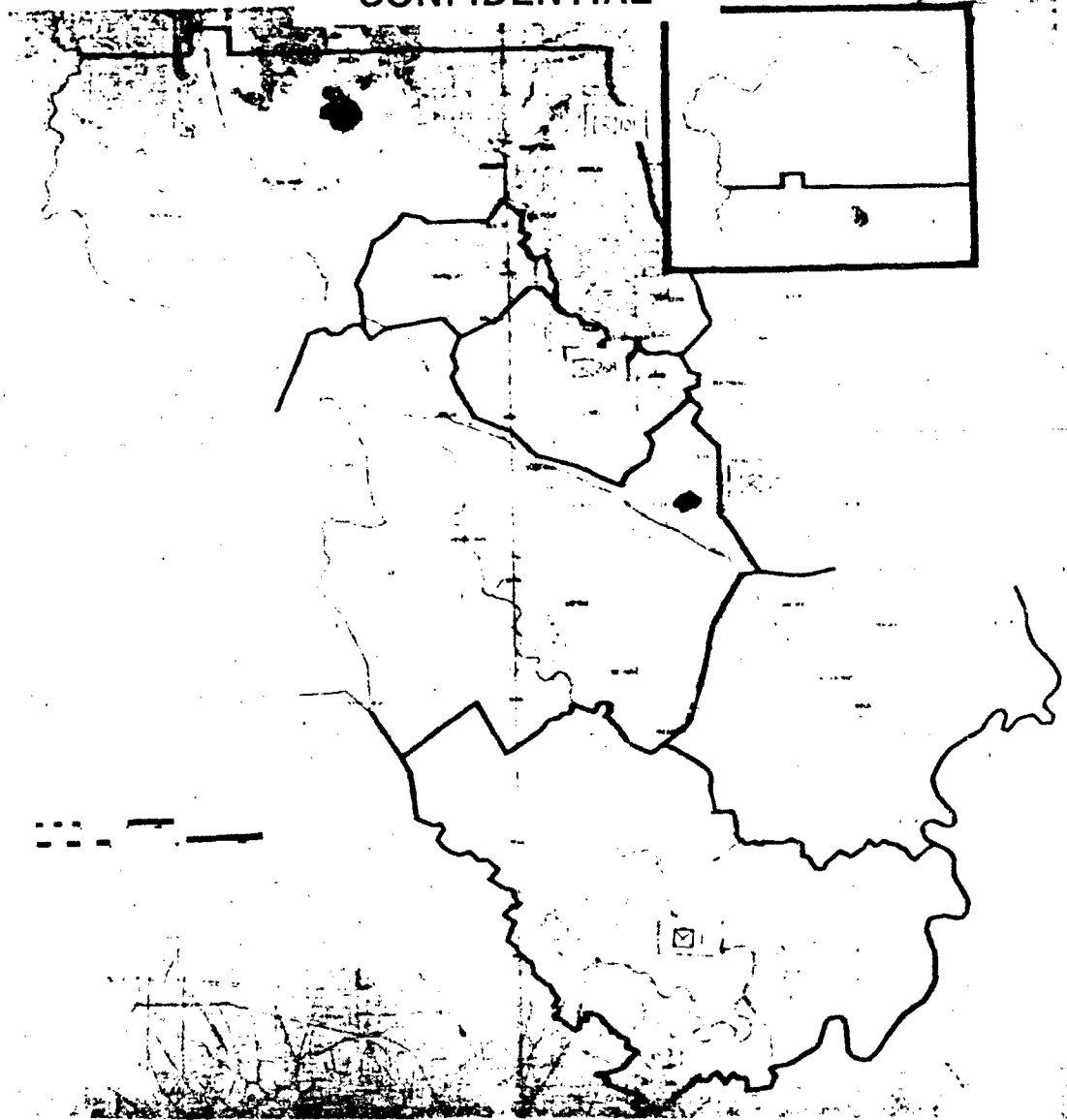
Whereas enemy forces present in our division area during January 1969 were estimated to be 18,000 strong, a year later we estimated their strength to be less than 4000. In January 1969 we had twelve enemy regiments in the area, a year later, four. The total number of battalions of all sorts went from 52 to 26 over the same period. These lesser figures, however, could have been misleading, since we had that many or more waiting it out in the Cambodian sanctuaries next door.

2 Tabs

- A - Enemy Forces in Area (Jan 69)
- B - Enemy Forces in Area (Feb 70)



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Sub-Region One (COSVN) Targetting

General Ewell decided to intensify our action against Sub-Region 1 (SR-1) in order to remove a critical link in the enemy's movement and resupply chain between War Zone C and Saigon. SR-1 had been a "bad actor" in this respect. The mission was carried out as a separate management scheme by units OPCON to II Field Force and the III Corps Tactical Zone. Initially, the executive secretarial responsibility was given to the Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division. This was transferred to me as the 25th Infantry Division Commander, in January 1970, beginning with the 1st Division's redeployment to the United States.

Units participating in this campaign were the 25th US Infantry Division, 1st US Infantry Division, 25th ARVN Infantry Division, 5th ARVN Infantry Division, and the US 3rd Riverine Force. Operations of many types were conducted -- all fashioned to take immediate advantage of developments and of changes in enemy tactics. Enemy organizations and methods were analyzed. Operations were oriented to the various aspects of the enemy situation -- base areas, lines of communication, and specific combat units. Rome Flow operations cleared areas known to contain enemy bases. Enemy lines of communication were identified and interdicted. Rice-denial programs were initiated to restrict his food supply. Defoliation missions opened up additional areas to visual reconnaissance. Navy patrol boats on the Saigon River operated against crossing points and severely restricted enemy attempts to move forces and supplies across the river. Enemy resupply became one of his most serious problems. Some of the main force units diverted combat troops to resupply operations, further limiting their combat effectiveness. Rome Flow operations denied the enemy use of his traditional base areas.

The enemy was intensely pressured and this pressure caused him to break his forces down into even smaller and smaller groups to minimize detection as he worked at his objectives. Friendly operations were modified accordingly to combat this trend. Small unit operations were further increased, more emphasis was placed on night operations. Psychological operations were integrated into the combat operations to a greater degree. Air and ground leaflet operations targetted against specific units, face-to-face persuasion, MEDCAP's, ICAP's and NITECAP's all played a part in the campaign against SR-1.

During the fall season of 1969, the enemy's combat effectiveness decreased. Sub-Region 1 "high points" were mentioned by prisoners and documents, but the intensity of these "high points" fell far below that apparently intended. Prisoners and ralliers began to talk freely about lack of food and the miserable existence they had led. The 101 Regiment relocated some of its elements from the Trapezoid north into the Michelin Rubber Plantation. Although attacks by fire continued in some parts of SR-1, the number of rounds fired at Allied installations decreased.

The SR-1 enemy increased his emphasis on sapper training. The 1 Quyet Thang Battalion received sapper training in January and the reorganization of two

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battalions of the 268 Regiment has already been mentioned. (See Inclosure 4 - The Enemy Forces) Although there was some enemy capability for replacement of losses by hospital returnees, there was no evidence of large replacement groups to bolster the sagging enemy units.

The capture in November of 2.5 million piasters by the 25th Infantry Division added to the enemy's food supply problem in SR-1. An operation by the 1st Infantry Division in December captured the communications intercept platoon, Military Intelligence Section, SR-1 Headquarters. This eliminated a source of valuable intelligence for the sub-region.

In January 1970 the 25th Infantry Division neutralized the signal company, 268 Regiment, capturing five radios, 10 PW's and a number of documents. This further degraded the regiment's command and control apparatus and made things even more difficult for SR-1. A very successful operational technique we used during this period was a "floating boundary" between the 25th Infantry Division and the 1st Infantry Division. The problems normally imposed in maneuver and fires along a unit boundary were greatly reduced by this control method. Early in 1970, some indications of a possible Post-TET Offensive began to appear in SR-1. However, this sub-region apparently was not capable of much offensive action at that time. We saw very little.

Enemy activity in February and March spiralled downward. I felt at the end of March, 1970, that the enemy in SR-1 was in a bad way. Enemy units moved in small groups and avoided contact.

In summary, 25th Infantry Division units accounted for the following enemy losses in SR-1 during the period 15 September to 15 March 1970:

Killed in Action	2692
Prisoners-of-War	297
Hoi Chanh	138
Rice (tons)	29.13
Medical Supplies (lbs)	1160
Rocket Propelled Grenades (rds)	1010
Mortars (rds)	2298
Rockets (rds)	217
Crew-served Weapons	69

Key personnel eliminated or neutralized by the division during the period included the:

- Assistant Chief of Staff, SR-1
- Assistant Chief, SR-1 Rear Service Section
- Battalion Commander, SR-1 Rear Service Section
- Political Officer, 268 Regiment
- Security Chief, Political Staff, SR-1
- Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion, 268 Regiment

This targetting of COSVN Sub-Region One was a highly successful venture.

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Tactical Radar Usage

Our radar assets played a very important role in what tactical successes we achieved in this division. The equipment fell broadly into two categories, the more sophisticated artillery radar sets (AN/TPS-25 and AN/MPQ-4A) and the more compact maneuver battalion sets (AN/PPS-5). There were several additional sets from which we could get information, such as the AN/TPS-33 positioned in our area but not organic to the division, and several experimental models of jungle penetrating radar.

Probably our most effective radar was the AN/TPS-25. With one set organic to Division Artillery, we were fortunate to have several others attached, in support of, or operating within our tactical area of interest. Thus we could draw on information from five sets, strategically placed to take maximum advantage to their characteristics and to gain the widest coverage. Particularly in the western portions of the division area along the Cambodian border, the flat, open terrain was ideally suited for the equipment, and it very successfully monitored enemy movements in this key region.

Those sets issued to maneuver battalions were employed in offensive rather than the more traditional defensive roles. During a period when we had little to fear from massive enemy assaults on our base camps and fire support bases, we could more effectively employ these detection devices by assigning a minimum number to defensive watching and a maximum number to offensive seeking on more active and lucrative areas. Thus, the smaller and more maneuverable sets were positioned not only in the "forward" fire support and patrol bases, but also in night offensive positions and ambush sites. The AN/PPS-5 radar sets were centrally managed by division, some even spotted in RF/PF outposts, avoiding clusters of radars and double or triple coverage where not necessary. AN/PPS-4 sets were positioned as desired by the brigade and battalion commanders to whom they were issued. One of our SOP's, however, was that any artillery radar, and any maneuver battalion radar in place for more than 72 hours, had to be surveyed in, thus greatly improving our capability for rapid and accurate target acquisitions and engagement. Continuous survey and repositioning of radars resulted in readily available survey data for most of the suitable permanent radar sites in the area of interest.

By this centralized system of radar management, consolidated ultimately under the Division Artillery Commander whom I charged with overall responsibility for the program, we were able to get a complete and fully integrated coverage pattern for our assigned area consistent with the limitations of the terrain. Where possible, sightings by smaller radars would be cross-checked by an overwatching AN/TPS-25.

The Tropic Lightning radar net, however, was used for more than just detection of a moving enemy. We experimented with using it to vector out ambush patrols from bases, to verify friendly unit locations, to confirm the accuracy of indirect fires, and even to detect incoming mortars and rockets (without using the AN/MPQ-4, that is). (See Inclosure 8 - Operational Techniques and Methods.)

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A word should be said about maintenance, a matter I monitored very closely. Reaction to problems within the division was speeded up by helilifting troublesome sets to the nearest support agency. Radar had priority second only to troops in contact. Our support from the higher echelon repair units beyond division level was superb.

1 Tab

▲ - Typical Daily Briefing Chart
on Radar Usage

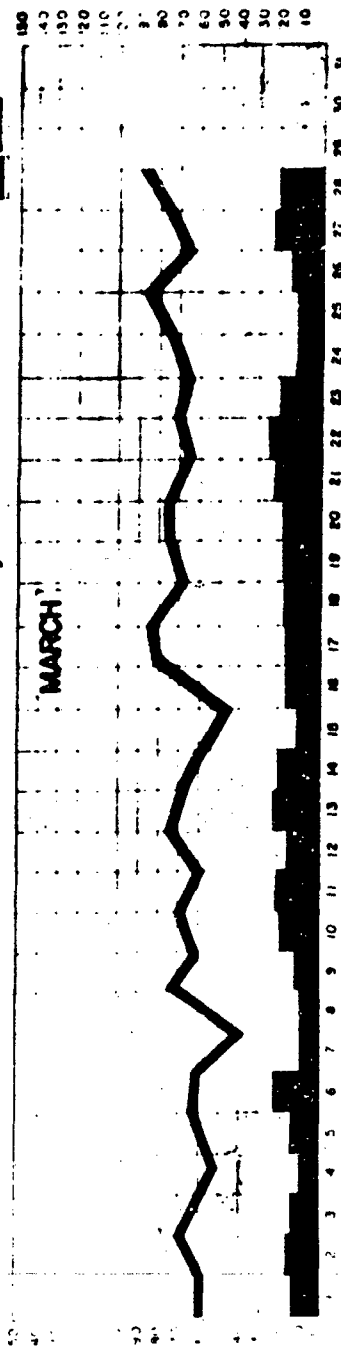
DIVISION RADAR STATUS PPS 4 - PPS 3 - TPS 23

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Locator	SEVEN DAY AVERAGE					LAST NIGHT 1900 - 0600				
	Sightings	Number Personnel	Engage Merits	Number Personnel	Bc 7 Count	Sightings	Number Personnel	Engage Merits	Number Personnel	Body Count
JACKSON	9	86	2	4	0	12	87	1	5	3
PHU HOA	3	20	2	10	0	5	13	0	0	0
THU THUA	8	22	1	3	0	15	41	5	14	0
BARBARA	4	23	1	9	0	3	14	2	11	0
TRUNG LAP	6	37	4	22	0	13	81	2	13	0
TOTAL JPR 9's	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PPS-4's	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	77	335	26	97	0	90	402	19	112	3

Total Radar Sightings And Engagements
Last 30 Days

TOTAL
SIGHTINGS
PERSONNEL
ENGAGED



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Duffel Bag Program and BASS

The wide variety of ground sensors or "Duffel Bags" as we knew them, gave the US Army an intelligence edge in Vietnam that no previous commanders have enjoyed. Particularly valuable in this counterinsurgency environment were these multi-activated sensors, most seismically actuated, but often keyed to pick up magnetic variations, voices, infrared radiation, or other indications of human presence. And they came in a profusion of names, Minisids, Fasids, Pirids, and Acoubouys, reflecting either their mode of operation or method of insertion. Arranged in elaborate and preplanned fields, they were placed to detect movement in key areas, along suspected infiltration routes, athwart river crossing sites, or on the flanks of friendly positions to provide early warning.

The duffel bag program started as a small effort, but as more equipment became available and as we grew used to this extra dimension in our intelligence effort, the program expanded and grew more centralized. BASS, the Battle Area Surveillance System, gave us more advanced facilities to control and monitor the fields and made faster responses possible. Information from duffel bags and other information gathering devices such as radar were funnelled into the TIC, the target information center, for dissemination to the maneuver or fire support units as required. Records were kept on trends of movement (See Inclosure 9 - Operational Analysis) and patterns noted for further exploitation as needed. The brigades then began to develop their sensor programs and a certain amount of decentralization was permitted. Shortly thereafter battalions too began to show an active interest in the program, although they could not provide the technically qualified personnel to monitor such fields as were planted in their area.

Thus, like our radar assets (See Inclosure 6 - Tactical Radar Usage), as we became more familiar with the capabilities of the equipment, our interest and employment of the inherent capabilities it offered expanded. The duffel bags were not used just for detecting enemy movement for the purpose of bringing fire on him. Ambushes, bushmasters, airmobile operations and ranger or minicav insertions were planned and conducted on the basis of sensor activations. In some cases tracker dog teams were used to follow up indirect fire or active fields. Sniper teams were emplaced to overwatch areas of successive activation.

The duffel bag system is still in its infancy, and yet it holds great potential for the Army of the future. Certainly the results we have achieved so far in this theater would seem to justify these hopes. Development on the horizon, moreover, seems to indicate the value of a more comprehensive system embracing all surveillance devices and target acquisition networks, with duffel bags representing only a portion of the whole. I caution, however, against premature doctrinal commitments without the fullest exploration of the ramifications of such an integrated intelligence system. A very broad base of data indeed will be required before we can profitably transfer our techniques developed here to another arena of war. I personally doubt that we will be able to achieve much in a way of manpower savings by widespread use of these devices - as some seem to think.

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Operational Techniques and Methods

As I said before, we saw a steadily decreasing level of enemy strength and activity, as the enemy fragmented his forces and dispersed them throughout the tactical area of interest. We attributed this to our fairly successful reconnaissance of the enemy and to his resultant difficulties in providing replacements to reinforce his decimated units. A number of enemy units withdrew from the area of interest into the Cambodian sanctuary to recuperate, refit and await replacements.

Thus, as I mentioned earlier, the division began in September 1969 to place greater emphasis on smaller and more numerous operations in order to intensify our surveillance of a dispersed adversary.

Our basic tactical objectives remained the same: to find, to fix and defeat the enemy. While "defeating" was usually accomplished by the effective use of firepower and maneuver, "finding" and "fixing" depended upon our ability to develop promising intelligence leads and our capability to exploit targets aggressively in a timely manner.

Here is a resume of some of our operational techniques:

Daily ground reconnaissance was reduced from company size to platoon size, in order to cover a larger area. Once we found the enemy we then used air assets and ground forces to fix him. We then brought our firepower to bear so he could be defeated.

Airmobile operations were scaled down and we resorted to operations called "Eagle Flights", "Eagle Eye" and "Mini-Cav" (these terms are local terms; a shorthand, as it were). Eagle Flights (four and five ship lifts) and Eagle Eye (three ship lifts) repeatedly inserted and extracted an infantry or ranger element in an area. These forces not only developed their own intelligence leads but were used as "on-call" forces to check or exploit new intelligence and to reinforce other contacts. Our Mini-Cav used two UH-1H helicopters for troop lift, a light scout team (one OH-6A and one AH-1G) for command/control and for aerial fire support, and it usually lifted a ground element of about 14 people (its composition varied according to the mission, i.e., infantry, RF/PF, police or intelligence specialists). The Mini-Cav package was designed as an economy of force measure to react rapidly to hard intelligence as to the enemy's presence. Eagle Flights/Eye, Mini-Cav-- were allocated on a basis of one per day to each brigade. (See Tab A - Inclosure 8 - Management of Aviation Assets)

We found that the enemy began more and more to move at night so. In turn, we increased our night activity. During the months of January, February, March and April 1970, our offensive night operations were much more numerous than were our daytime offensive operations - by at least 10 percent. Our Bushmaster teams, combat ambush patrols of company size, infiltrated into ambush sites, normally during the hours of darkness, and then

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further separated into platoon, and smaller sized patrols for nighttime exploitation, were substantially increased. These accounted for most of our enemy contacts at night. We were quite successful in "taking the night away from the enemy" in a number of areas. Over 70 percent of all the contacts with the enemy during February 1970 were at night. (See Tab B - Inclosure 8 - Bushmaster Operations)

I also changed the style of our long range reconnaissance patrols (Rangers) from intelligence-gathering to one of offensive combat. (See Tab C - Inclosure 8 - Ranger Operations) Beginning in October 1969 our Rangers' method of employment was oriented primarily to ambush and reconnaissance, to "snatch" missions, and "sniff" operations,* and air rescue missions with sniper teams. The US Navy and RVN forces helped these patrols as required. (See Tab D - Inclosure 8 - Riverine Operations, and Tab E - Inclosure 8 - Snipers)

We paid great attention, too, to our ground surveillance radars and ground sensors. We used these offensively, to grind the enemy down. We spoiled several of his planned attacks, primarily because we had these formidable surveillance assets. (See Inclosure 6 - Tactical Radar Usage, and Inclosure 7 - Duffel Bag Program and BASS) We used radars extensively to:

- Direct the movement of forces into a position to block enemy withdrawal and interdict his movement.
- Direct the placement of sniper teams into areas of enemy activity.
- Vector aircraft into target areas.
- Vector friendly units during link-up and reinforcement at night.
- Aid in the selection of ambush positions through pattern analysis.
- Vector sweep elements into areas previously engaged by artillery and gunships at night.
- Confirm the accuracy of indirect fires and assist in the adjustment of these fires.

Our capability to conduct offensive night air operations was enhanced by the "Night Hawk" aircraft. This was a UH-1H aircraft on which was mounted a 7.62mm mini-gun. Illumination and observation was provided by an AN/VSS 3 Xenon searchlight with an AN/TVS 4 night observation device attached coaxially. This configuration allowed for three modes of scanning; ambient light, ambient light intensified by infra-red illumination, and white light illumination. Each Night Hawk took aloft 13 aerial illumination flares. Two soldiers who manned the searchlight and mini-gun were "permanently" assigned to their aircraft. We had better motivation and a higher skill level as a result of this policy.

* A "snatch" mission was an airborne raid to capture prisoners; a "sniff" was one that sought an indication of the enemy's presence by measuring chemical particles that had been emitted by the enemy.

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Our artillery played a major role in our operations. We made a number of innovations:

We established Combined Fire Support Coordination Centers in each of the provinces within the division tactical area of interest. In these centers representatives of US, ARVN, and GVN agencies worked to expedite the clearance of fires and to coordinate fire support. These were most effective.

In October 1969 I assigned to the Commanding Officer, Division Artillery, supervisory responsibility for the divisional radar program. This responsibility included operator and supervisor training, site inspections, positioning--based on sighting and engagement data--and technical maintenance. All of the radars except the AN/PPS-4 (i.e., the AN/PPS-5, the AN/TPS-25 and AN/MPQ-4A) were handled centrally within this program.

We also placed great stress on the clearance of fires and the rules of engagement. We required all personnel involved in the delivery of fire support to attend initial orientations and quarterly refresher briefings on our procedures and on our rules. In this way we minimized incidents involving innocent civilians. (See Inclosure 11 - The Problem of Innocent Civilians in War)

6 Tabs

- A - Management of Aviation Assets
- B - Bushmaster Operations
- C - Ranger Operations
- D - Riverine Operations
- E - Snipers
- F - Kit Carson Scouts

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Management of Aviation Assets

As we shifted our emphasis within the division to small unit operations, the extended coverage and decentralized control, so important to these operations, made management of aviation assets much more difficult. Under the system we were using at that time, the commander of each unit having organic aircraft was responsible for the employment of these aircraft. We soon found that that system did not provide us with the flexibility necessary for our new style of operations; so we centralized all helicopter assets under the operational control of the division aviation officer. All requests for aircraft were processed by the Assistant Chief of Staff, G3. Each request was evaluated and a priority assigned. The requests, once categorized, were then sent to the 25th Aviation Battalion operations office for satisfaction. That agency assigned available aircraft in accordance with the G3's priority.

Our organic air cavalry was modified to be more responsive along the lines previously discussed in this basic inclosure. We positioned light fire teams in each forward brigade area (two during the day and one at night); these consisted of two AH-1G (or UH-1G) attack helicopters. They were released to the supported ground commander. This centralized method allowed us to tailor our committed forces to the needs of the situation (we could juggle our assets in almost any way we needed, light scout team employment to that of company airmobile insertions).

We also kept a "string" on the aviators and aircraft assigned to each of the brigades. The chief of staff and the division aviation officer monitored their flying hour and maintenance programs. They also tasked brigades for extra light observation helicopter support when the situation demanded it. Thus brigade aviation assets were at "beck and call" for division missions away from their parent unit when the situation required this. However, I tried to permit brigade commanders the widest flexibility possible under the conditions that existed.

Most of our utility helicopters organic to the division were used for combat support and combat service support rather than for combat assault missions. Thus, we relied heavily upon assault helicopter support from II Field Force, Vietnam. These nonorganic assets, placed in direct support daily, were controlled much the same as our organic helicopters were controlled - tailored to the mission. We usually made up packages consisting of one command and control helicopter, two gunships, and four utility helicopters to be issued to commanders according to the priorities already discussed.

We handled our air cargo support somewhat differently. These requests were consolidated at division level through the division transportation officer in the division support command, who managed the air cargo program--again, centrally. Naturally, he had to coordinate his actions with the division aviation officer and we were able to improve our performance greatly in this way. (See Chart 1)

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So far I have treated only those matters associated directly with the 25th Division. Some treatment is appropriate in the way 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division managed its aircraft program. This brigade, as a separate brigade, received its helicopter assets directly from the Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam. Its organic assets included four light observation helicopters and four utility helicopters. To round out its airmobile capability an air cavalry troop was placed in direct support by II Field Force. We, in the 25th, provided supplemental maintenance and other support on an "as-needed" basis. Otherwise, my responsibility was one of overwatch and supervision. The techniques of management already discussed were used in the 3rd of the 9th as well.

This centralized approach, in my view, paid us great dividends, although I am not at all sure that Army aviators would unanimously agree with me.

1 Chart

1 - Air Cargo (CH-47)

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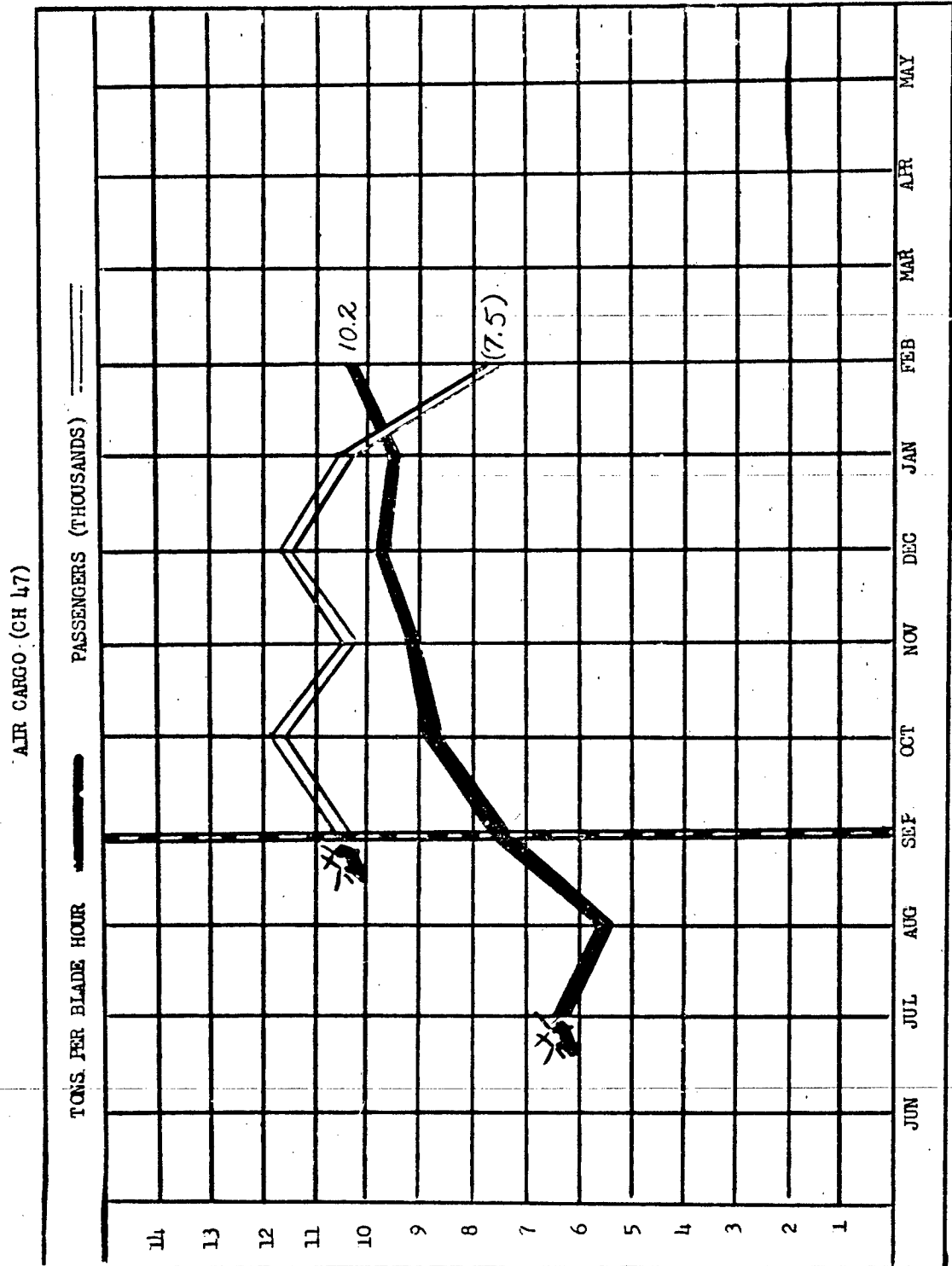


CHART 1 TO TAB A TO ENCL 8

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Bushmaster Operations

Bushmaster operations have a devastating effect on the enemy. However, the operation is only as good as the intelligence upon which it is based and the competence of the company leaders who execute it.

Here's how we conceived the Bushmaster, a company sized operation. The first step was to choose an area of operations (AO) based on valid intelligence (i.e., POW interrogations, previous operations, observed trail activity, agent reports, radar sightings, etc.). The area for an infantry company might cover two to four grid squares (even more) and might be of any shape. The Bushmaster force would be inserted by helicopter, by track, or by foot. It might be inserted directly into the AO, or clandestinely by whatever method that was best suited to the situation at hand and that was commensurate with the skill of the force employed. Once in the AO a small command group would set up a clandestine command post (CP). The platoons would move out from the CP and would usually fragment into smaller ambush patrols (AP). A detailed map study and careful positioning would allow a company commander to configure his AO with AP's interdicting the most likely routes of movement, including waterways when this was indicated. Such a configuration would be maintained throughout the first night and the next day. The maximum number of personnel would be allowed to rest during the hours of daylight. Just before or at dusk the following night, all AP's would disperse to alternate locations to increase coverage of the AO. The following morning, approximately 38 hours after insertion, the Bushmaster operation would usually end. Airmobile assets would be used to extract the unit or the unit might conduct a reconnaissance on multiple axes back to its base.

Of critical importance to the successful conduct of a bushmaster is the clandestine introduction into the AO of the troops to be used. Moreover, small ambush patrols must be located so as to complement and reinforce each other. A properly placed portable radar can provide critical information and materially aid in the early identification of the approaching enemy. The basic principles of ambush must be forcefully applied: cover and concealment, alertness during the hours of darkness (by enforced rest during the day), and correct positioning of all available weapons. Indirect fire weapons must be closely coordinated in as much as many small units will be located throughout the AO.

As I said, we found the Bushmaster to be highly effective.

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Ranger Operations

A particularly valuable combat asset of the division was that of Company F, 75th Infantry (Ranger). The assigned mission of the Ranger Company was to exploit designated targets by combat operations. Operating under the staff supervision of the ACofS, G3, the company was employed in several modes.

A most successful approach was to place one of the three organic Ranger platoons in direct support of each brigade, retaining the company headquarters under division control. The 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division had its own organic Ranger company (Company E). It was equally valuable. Operations were planned and supervised by the brigades with the advice and assistance of the company commander. The ACofS, G3, monitored operations and retained general staff supervision and reporting responsibility.

Each Ranger platoon was organized with a platoon headquarters and three or four teams of eight men. Each team was armed with an M-60 LMG and an M-79 grenade launcher and carried two AN/PRC-25 radios. At least one member of each team was sniper qualified. Teams were inserted by helicopter, mechanized infantry, river patrol boat or by coordinated stay-behind operations with friendly units, and usually remained in position for up to three days. The Rangers in this division were used offensively as opposed to the more conventional and passive role—that of gathering intelligence. We also employed the Rangers on rescue missions; with sniper teams; with ambush patrols; on reconnaissance missions; and in combined operations with the US Navy and Vietnamese forces, and on nighttime helicopter raids to secure prisoners.

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Riverine Operations

The terrain in a large part of the divisional tactical area of interest permitted effective use of waterborne infantry. Boats from the US Navy, Vietnamese Navy and also our division engineer boats were used for "eagle-float" and "aquabush" operations.

Our "eagle-float" was a reconnaissance operation in which infantry, riding in boats, landed to engage targets of opportunity or to search likely enemy locations. Observation helicopters were normally used to guide and direct these waterborne forces.

Our "Aquabushes" were ambush patrols inserted on land at night by river boats. But sometimes the infantry remained in the boats and engaged the enemy from the river. Here an alert sniper was often very effective in catching the enemy unaware.

The Patrol Boat, River (PBR) was most often used. This was a highly maneuverable, swift, 31 foot motor boat capable of providing an amazing amount of fire power from the two or more heavy machine guns it had mounted. Normally we emplaced six man "squads" on them—an ideally sized force for these specialized operations. We also used in our riverine forays the Boston Whalers and our engineer bridge boats.

Units of the division frequently joined with National Police or National Police Field Force officials to establish river traffic control points where civilians were checked for identification and contraband. The actual halting and searching of personnel was accomplished by Vietnamese officials while US personnel provided security and a reaction force should such be required. MEDCAP or ICAP* operations were frequently conducted in conjunction with these operations. We had excellent cooperation from the government of Vietnam officials in these activities.

In summary, waterborne operations were highly profitable to us. We successfully interdicted enemy movements and resupply activities by sampan, and we denied the enemy his bases and safe havens along the waterways by these techniques. Cooperation from the United States Navy was superb.

* An ICAP is a medical aid mission within a village or hamlet in which intelligence is sought and propaganda dispensed. A MEDCAP is simply a medical aid mission. In both instances here the people would, of course, be on sampans and junks.

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Snipers

We had good success with snipers in the 25th Infantry Division.

Our sniper program actually began on 26 July 1969, when a trained sniper instructor group was assigned to us from the 9th Infantry Division, which was redeploying at that time. The first trained snipers became available to battalion commanders on 16 August 1969, the date our first sniper class graduated. We allocated our student slots at the school so that we could keep eight snipers in each battalion available for operations. We accepted only volunteers in the program. I think this was only sound.

We tested the capabilities of those graduated immediately, for we were having a particular problem with mining incidents on those roads which were used extensively for logistical convoys. By positioning snipers in towers, which we set up at various places along the affected roads, we were able to reduce mining to insignificant proportions. The enemy who had been doing this mining had long considered himself immune, but with the advent of the sniper he soon found out that this immunity was false. He acted accordingly and the mining subsided.

As we expanded our sniper force we gained other benefits. We published comprehensive training and employment directives to assist and advise subordinate commanders in a wide variety of tactical applications on ambushes, on patrols, at fixed sites, and we began teaching sniper employment in the training program for all replacements attending reinforcement training. We sent the sniper instructor group, during training cycle breaks, to the battalions to discuss with commanders and principal staff officers methods which had shown results elsewhere in the division area. We sought to impress upon each commander just how effective these could be in dealing with infiltrating enemy forces.

Our equipment was superb. The weapons we used played an important role in the successes we had. We received new XM21 accurized national match grade M14 rifles, with adjustable ranging telescopes. Our starlight scopes were invaluable.

Our sniper program, in my opinion, greatly minimized our friendly casualties, because it severely constrained the enemy in his initiatives at night during the hours of curfew. He could not move freely, with impunity, to strike us.

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Kit Carson Scouts

We had good results with Kit Carson Scouts (KCS).

These were selected male Chieu Hoi returnees (former communists who had rallied to the government) voluntarily employed on a full-time basis as paramilitary employees to assist in military operations. Each scout had a local police file check before employment. Scouts could be released at any time, with or without cause, and they were discharged immediately when their sympathies were questioned.

The current authorization for the 25th Infantry Division scout program is 400 scouts, with present employment slightly less than this. We sought to recruit one scout per squad in each maneuver battalion.

Employing units provided these scouts their living facilities and logistical support from organic resources. They were authorized the same allowance of clothing and equipment as US soldiers, but they were issued only that equipment the unit commander felt they needed to perform their duties. Their weapons were provided by the unit to which they were assigned.

Whenever possible, we assigned these men to units operating in areas familiar to them. They were offered the same measure of security and fair treatment as any US soldier, and were afforded medical treatment in US facilities for service-connected injuries.

We used them as guides, point men, "tunnel rats", interrogators, infantry soldiers, and interpreters (about 3-5 KCS per battalion have a working knowledge of English). We did not use them as members of a separate scout element for obvious reasons. The Kit Carson Scouts were especially adept at recognizing mines and booby traps and other indications of the enemy.

Sometimes US soldiers did not readily accept the Kit Carson Scout. The scout first had to prove his loyalty. During my period of duty with the division the average number of terminations was about three to five percent per month.

These scouts were most effective in identifying and eliminating members of the Viet Cong Infrastructure.

In summary, we had a few problems but also a large measure of success with this program.

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Operational Analysis

I found it was extremely important that I closely examine our operational results on a continuing basis, so that I could gain an adequate appreciation for the overall picture of how the command was progressing.

I am convinced that operational analysis techniques have tremendous potential for application in future combat and particularly in the complex environment of this type of war. I saw how others had used this method with success; particularly General Ewell, when he commanded the 9th Infantry Division prior to my succession to command of that division. In no other war have we been so deluged by so many tidbits of information, for we have been accustomed to an orderliness associated with established battlelines. Here, though, we have had to make our decisions based not upon enemy regimental courses of action, but rather upon the numerous isolated actions of communist squad-sized elements. So with the scale down of the level of operations, we have had to increase our reliance on objective analysis of available information to arrive at logical courses of action.

As I mentioned earlier (See Inclosure 4 - the Enemy Forces), the enemy experienced particular difficulty sustaining his momentum within the three provinces in which this division operated. We found that the enemy desperately attempted new techniques in the hope of achieving any measurable success. Thus, we placed particular emphasis on the sorting of the flood of data we collected so as to detect trends and changes in communist methods and plans. We thus were able to concentrate our efforts on countering his intended moves.

We experimented with the division's UNIVAC 1005 computer, which was actually designed to deal with financial and personnel accountability statistics. In effect, we "fooled" this computer by the way we programmed it; thus, we were able to use it for operational analysis, also. This was significant for I am convinced that the computer analysis at division level definitely has application and should be carefully examined for its potential in the future, although one ought not to get a "hang up" over this means—because it is no substitute for thinking through one's problems.

We analyzed all facets of our offensive operations to determine the relative efficiency of our various techniques; we studied our mine and booby trap experiences with a view to minimizing our losses to these insidious contraptions; and, we looked at the enemy's methods and patterns, such as his attacks by fire and terrorist activities. We published the results of our analyses and made our findings available to all subordinate commanders. Those findings which had application to other units within the theater were published as lessons learned and sent to the Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam.

The Charts within Inclosure 18 roll up the broad statistics associated with combat operations.

Inclosure 10 treats in greater depth a typical study: Mines and booby traps.

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The Problem of Mines and Booby Traps

Units operating within the 25th Infantry Division tactical area of interest during my period of command were confronted with a number of separate and distinct problems with respect to mines and booby traps.

These problems varied from province to province depending upon the degree of emphasis that communist forces operating within each more localized area placed on this tactic. For instance, in Tay Ninh Province, the mines we encountered were preponderantly metallic and could be detected with the standard mine detectors. Booby trapping in that province was sporadic and did not present a significant hazard. In Hau Nghia Province, however, enemy mining was of the hand manufactured, non-metallic type, devices not detectable with our standard mine detectors.

The enemy also sought to thwart our mine detection by planting them in areas marked by a high concentration of battlefield junk and metallic fragments. Off-road mining occurred in intermittent random patterns so as to interdict cross-country mechanized movement.

Booby traps were most prevalent in Hau Nghia Province. That area known as the Citadel, which includes the northern part of Cu Chi District, west of Cu Chi city, north of Highway 1, and the small portions of Binh Duong Province west of the Saigon River, has, since the beginning of the Viet Minh movement, been the center of insurgency in this province. This area has been aptly termed the "Iron Fist" by the communists, and it proved an area of some of our bitterest engagements. In Long An Province, the mining problem was negligible, but booby traps were everywhere, it seemed.

As a general approach, the enemy sought to capitalize on our human attributes, so as to make us more vulnerable to this insidious form of warfare.

On our human curiosity -- he endeavored to tempt the anxious.

On our desire for comfort -- he sought to interdict the easy paths.

On our fatigue -- he tried to strike when we would be more careless.

On our tendency to stick together -- he would seek multiple casualties by his riggings.

We sought to improve our understanding of this serious problem by intensive operational review. We tried to determine patterns, enemy methods and also areas of concentrated activity. Our countermeasures were centered around the use of flame munitions, organic land clearing assets, and engineer mine detection techniques, both mechanical and visual. We also sought to use unattended ground sensors in conjunction with supporting artillery, ambush patrols, and snipers.

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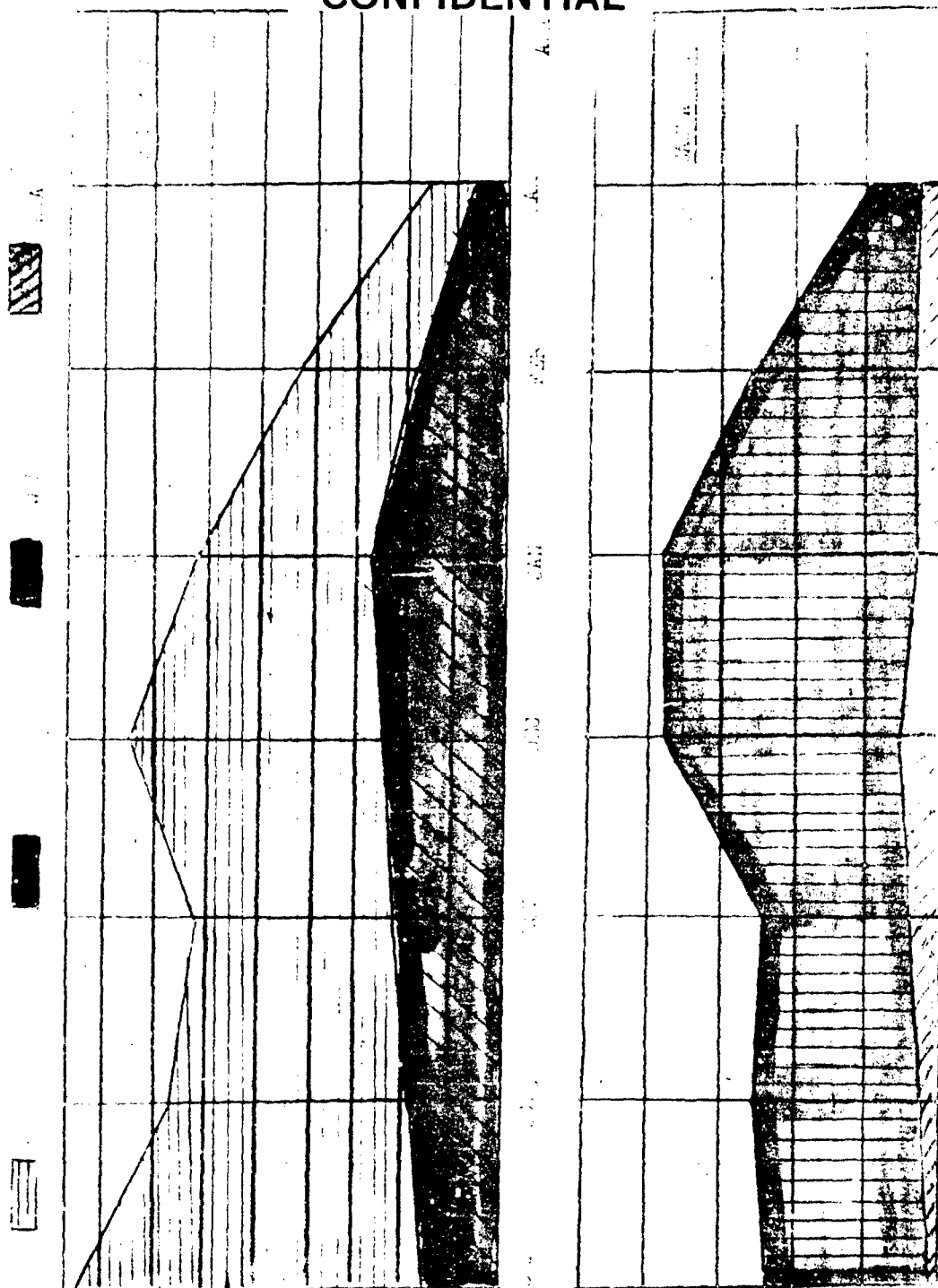
The enemy, we found, often explaced booby traps in the daytime. We found that an efficient mechanical means to neutralize these devices was a 90 foot, three-ton anchor chain hauled between two bulldozers. Even so, with all of our study of countermeasures, we found that the alert soldier, educated to the booby trap menace, was the most effective means we had of neutralizing and avoiding these explosive devices. It was a subject stressed at frequent intervals throughout the soldier's tour, and we were finally able to neutralize about eighty-five percent of those we encountered. Tab A shows some measure of the success we attained. Tab B profiles the greatest periods of vulnerability that the soldier encountered during a day in booby trapped areas.

2 Tabs

- A - Mines and Booby Traps
- B - Booby Trap Hourly Incidents

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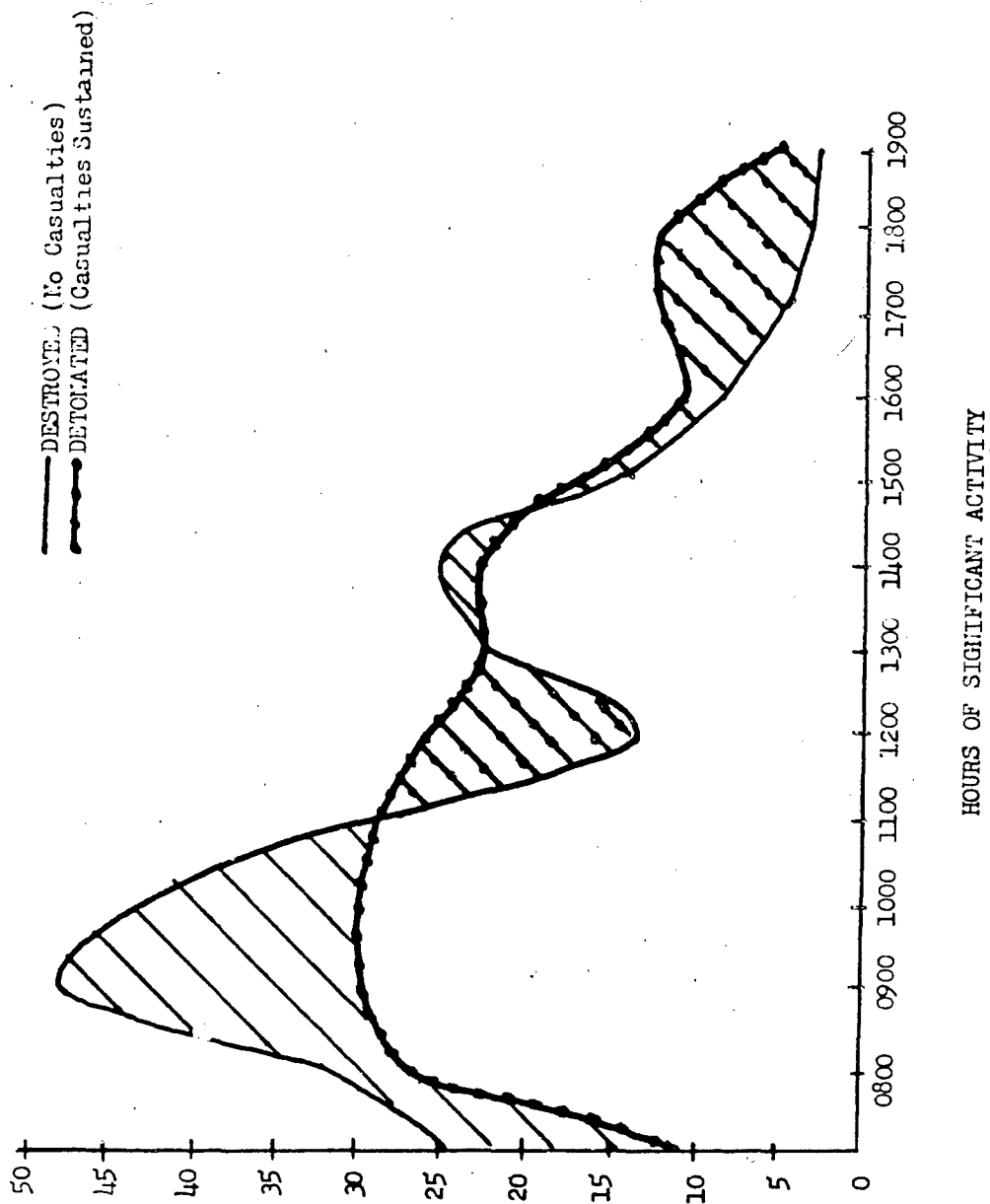


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NUMBER OF BOOBY TRAPS ENCOUNTERED

BOOBY TRAP HOURLY INCIDENTS



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The Problem of Innocent Civilians in War

This grave problem has been with us ever since man began to fight with his own kind, and the problem has recently been magnified even more in the public's eye. Soldiers, however, have long been aware of the costs of misused or misdirected combat power. The urgency of the problem has never been greater than in Vietnam, partly because of the awesome power the allied forces now have at their disposal, and partly because in this insurgency environment the enemy is spread thin and has blended himself in with the populace. Never before, however, have so many controls been placed on the use of combat power, and in my opinion they have been exceedingly successful.

From the moment they first arrived in the division, the officers and men of Tropic Lightning were made fully aware that their task was not limited to fighting the enemy alone. A simultaneous element of their task was to minimize disruption in the daily lives of those who were loyal to the government and were innocent of any wrongdoing. The key lay in determining who was hostile and who was not. Accordingly, the division, within MACV directives, followed a stringent set of rules for the execution of combat missions against hostile forces in the area of operations. These precautions, known as the rules of engagement, established strict guidelines within which targets could be engaged and, hopefully, prevented injury to the innocent. These procedures were particularly successful in regulating the employment of indirect fires (artillery and mortars) and air delivered ordnance (helicopter gunships and tactical air).

The first step in the process was knowing in what type of area the target was located. This determined the extent of clearances required: Vietnamese political, Vietnamese military, and, of course, US military. The more populous areas required a more comprehensive list of persons from whom permission was required. As a further precaution, the people were warned by broadcast or leaflet of any impending artillery or air strike. The less inhabited the area, the less restrictive the clearance. A refusal by anyone in the clearance chain to grant permission meant that the target could not be engaged.

Perhaps the clearest test of the hostility of a target was the receipt of fire from it — prima facie evidence, as it were. In such cases our units or aircraft could return fire as a matter of self-preservation, but only to the degree necessary to deal with the threat. No overkill air strike could be called down on a Viet Cong sniper without proper prior clearance. I am convinced that this restraint by each responsible commander played a key role in minimizing civilian casualties.

I mentioned earlier that the rules of engagement criteria worked very successfully with indirect fires and air delivered weaponry. This package of rules, however, was not nearly so neatly tied with regard to small arms engagements. When unidentified forces were separated by meters instead of kilometers, the sweeping clearance of whole grid squares was useless. Here, the local commander's judgement was at a premium. Here, the NCO in the flank ambush had grave decisions to make.

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He did have some additional guidelines, however. Certain areas were designated as no-fire zones, ostensibly those in which the "friendlies" lived. Additionally, each province chief specified a curfew for all Vietnamese civilians in his province, a set of hours which varied with the area — along Main Supply Routes, in New Life Hamlets, in urban centers, in the woods and fields. The presumption was that all persons not in a no-fire zone and not obeying curfew restrictions were hostile, and this was by and large a correct one. Even so, since fishermen seldom had watches to time their moves in the early morning hours, brigade and battalion commanders had, on a number of occasions, to establish their own cut-off times to avoid engaging innocents. Finally, there was a standard challenge procedure whereby the patrol member or Kit Carson Scout (See Tab F to Inclosure 8) would accost the suspected individuals and ask for identification. If the challenge went unanswered and a subsequent warning shot was ignored, the ground forces would seek normal political and military permission to engage.

Unfortunately these checks were just as reliable as the men imposing them, and whenever injury was found to be sustained by innocent Vietnamese civilians, an immediate investigation was ordered. An officer was appointed on orders to determine whether an accident or incident occurred because of US involvement and to render a report to be reviewed by my or higher headquarters. If negligence was deemed to have caused the injury or damage, appropriate disciplinary and corrective action was taken. Follow up with the civilians was immediate. The expression of sympathy is far more important to the Vietnamese than blame for an accident or monetary reimbursement for injury or property occurred. This was true in all cases, not only those concerning fires but also vehicular accidents and other non-combat related incidents.

Because of the language barrier, innocent civilians were sometimes detained in an area of active operations. During February an Innocent Civilian Center — patterned on the one conceived by Major General William A. Knowlton within the 9th Infantry Division — was established at Cu Chi Base Camp. Its purpose was to lessen the detainee's inconvenience associated with his detention and to place this action in a perspective which could be understood and accepted by the innocent civilian detained. In attractive Vietnamese surroundings and seated in familiar, comfortable furniture, he could read books in his own language or eat food of his own style — plus a sampling of US food — and the opportunity to play the games he was raised on. As soon as transportation back to his village or hamlet could be arranged, he was returned to his place of home.

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The Cycle of Operations and Standdown

Within the division, we had a system whereby each maneuver unit was given an opportunity to standdown for 48 hours at the base camp recreational facility about every 40 to 50 days. This was considered optimum, but was not always attainable, although we tried hard to meet this standard. This cycle was designed simply to provide the soldier in the field an opportunity to change his environment. Because of maintenance requirements, some mechanized units stood down for as long as 96 hours at a time.

This served to complement our standard program of operational pacing in which we sought always to have at least 60% of our maneuver units conducting combat operations, 15% participating in more or less static security missions, with the remaining 25% of the maneuver units scheduled for standdown coupled with some training and maintenance. Our actual employment was somewhat better than these figures. See Tab A following, for the average breakdown of operations.

We felt that this program, conceived by the Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam, gave us a rhythm of activity that could be sustained, in which the soldier could be kept reasonably fresh and his skills reasonably sharp.

1 Tab

A - Maneuver Unit Utilization Chart, 15 Sep 69 - 1 Mar 70

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MANEUVER UNIT UTILIZATION

PERIOD 150600 SEP 69 - 010600 MAR 70

(60%) (15%) (25%)

DAY NIGHT	COMPANIES AVAILABLE	OFFENSIVE			SECURITY			STANDARD			OFFENSIVE UTILIZATION	SECURITY UTILIZATION	STAND- DOWN UTILIZATION
		SQD	PLAT	CO	SQD	PLAT	CO	SQD	PLAT	CO			
1ST BDE	2053	424 1452	2217 1913	863 638	69 180	73 737	88 114	69 51	272 160	157 140	74%	12%	11%
2ND BDE	2301	9 113	1169 1431	987 653	38 120	240 857	91 242	4 4	320 161	177 99	77%	16%	7%
3RD BDE	1608	2194 4531	1200 952	55 285	542 694	250 465	70 59	1121 292	154 51	103 89	72%	15%	13%
3RD BDE 9TH DIV	2155	700 2788	1943 2128	840 484	185 212	531 530	48 58	243 182	458 515	160 205	71%	12%	17%
OTHER	106	248 245	17 14	0 0	0 0	3 4	0 0	652 665	0 0	0 0	30%	1%	69%
DIVISION TOTAL	8223	3575 9129	6545 6438	3247 2060	834 1206	1097 2593	297 473	2089 1194	1204 887	597 533	73%	14%	13%

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Division Training

Our program was fairly simple.

Formal: It started when the soldier arrived in the division and continued throughout the extent of his tour. Initial training was conducted by instructors of the Tropic Lightning Academy, the focus of the divisional school system. This instruction was designed to enhance the skills already learned in basic combat and advanced individual training and, further, to acquaint each soldier with the special situation he could expect to find in our divisional area. The handling of prisoners, mines and booby traps, and the Geneva Convention — he was given varied fare. We had other courses for specific combat skills: a leadership course designed to teach basic leadership techniques to personnel in the grade of E4 and below; an advanced combat marksman course (sniper) to train expert riflemen in long range engagement, using national match grade rifles; courses of specialized nature, such as "tunnel rat" techniques, handling of explosives and demolitions, and base camp defense. Our Tropic Lightning Academy provided mobile training teams to disseminate lessons learned in various subjects.

Informal, periodic refresher training within the tactical units: Each battalion commander conducted periodic refresher training at field locations and at base areas during standdowns. This training was governed by the needs of the unit as determined by the commander. However, I established these priorities: rifle marksmanship and zeroing, ambush techniques, airmobile techniques, mines and booby traps, and map reading.

The idea was to keep the soldier at a reasonably sharp level of skill.

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Coming and Going In the 25th Infantry Division

Here is the way we took care of personnel coming in and leaving the division:

Replacements arrived daily from the United States, generally at the 90th Replacement Battalion at Long Binh. These were identified and assisted by 25th Division liaison personnel at Long Binh and Bien Hoa as they were processed through the replacement battalion and the Bien Hoa air terminal enroute to Cu Chi. Upon arrival each soldier was given a short informal briefing and area orientation, including a personal greeting by the 25th Division Replacement Detachment commander, followed by assignments to quarters. He was then given an opportunity to rest, clean up and prepare for the evening ... his duties finished on his first day in the division.

The next morning he received a comprehensive series of briefings, to include an orientation presented by me, or one of the assistant division commanders, or a designated senior officer. Each of these briefings was designed to highlight the individual soldier's role in this division. Subjects generally covered were:

- History, composition and mission of the division
- The divisional area of operations
- The divisional Reinforcement Training School
- Recreational and post exchange facilities
- Personal security measures
- Mail and postal services
- Safety (ammunition, weapons, vehicles, etc.)
- Awards and decorations program
- Religious services
- Educational program
- Red Cross assistance program
- "Donut Dollies" orientation (Red Cross girls)(See Tab A)
- Division information program

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In the afternoon the new soldier processed through the Adjutant General Section, the Finance Section, and the detachment supply section. Here, a determined effort was made to assist the individual soldier in solving any personal problems, determine his preferences for assignment and his qualifications, and pay him his back pay. Moreover, these sections generally provided the following services:

AG Section: Review of records for completeness and correctness (i.e., DEROS date, review of orders, and emergency data cards, status of Servicemen's Group Life Insurance, etc.)

Finance Section: A look at finance records; and follow-up on allotments, partial pay, savings plans, and any special problems encountered during leave or travel to Vietnam.

Detachment Supply Section: Replacement of unserviceable uniform items, free tailoring, and barber service.

We sought to give the new replacement a feeling that he had joined the "finest" division in the Republic of Vietnam. To this end, other specific morale activities were included. For example, soon after arrival in the division area, the division band presented a brief but inspiring concert to bolster the soldier's spirit and to celebrate his joining the division. I also sent to each soldier's parents or wife a letter telling them that we were glad to have their son or husband with us and that we would take care of him to the best of our ability. The soldier also received a packet which included copies of Tropic Lightning News and Thunder magazine - divisional publications giving him a feel for the outfit he was joining.

Upon completion of processing activities the new replacement was furnished transportation to his unit.

Our awards policy was fairly liberal. In my view, such a liberal policy is one of the best motivating and unifying impulses one could have.

While assigned to the division each individual was assured recognition for valor and service performed in the division. In order to be timely in this and to minimize paper work, rosters were regularly prepared, listing those who had served in the division for five months and sent to unit commanders who then deleted those individuals not deemed deserving of awards. Those not deleted were then given an award, either a Bronze Star or an Army Commendation Medal as indicated by the commander. This process was repeated for each soldier at the end of ten months service. In this way we had reasonable assurance that worthy soldiers did not go unrecognized.

We presented valor awards to all deserving cases and a significant number were presented through an impact awards system designed to dramatize the heroic accomplishment, and to spur individuals to greater effort. This had a profound impact on the soldier. It was one of the best things we did.

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Soldiers were notified to report for out-processing about four days prior to departure, and personnel and finance records were processed. On the morning of the third day prior to departure, all rotatees reported to the 45th Division Replacement Detachment where they received their military travel authorization. When he finally left the division, the rotatee was furnished a Division Certificate of Achievement, a letter of appreciation signed by me, and an ALOHA farewell. Transportation was then furnished to the 90th Replacement Battalion where the returning soldier was manifested for air travel to the United States.

This program was designed to make the soldier feel welcome in the division, as he was; to make him aware of his importance to us as a member of the Tropic Lightning Team, as he was; to make him feel that he was making an important contribution to his country as a stalwart citizen, as he did -- and did it so admirably.

1 Tab

A - Red Cross and the Donut Dollies

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Red Cross and the Donut Dollies

The American Red Cross provided two separate services that contributed importantly to the welfare and morale of US military personnel in the 25th Infantry Division TAOI. The Red Cross Field Office and Clubmobile Unit assisted the division effort with prompt, efficient and continuous support.

During my tenure this office was headed by Mr. Eugene Guy at the command post. A field office representative was also located at Tay Ninh Base Camp with Headquarters, 1st Brigade. In situations where divisional elements operated outside the division area of interest, a field office representative either accompanied these units or made arrangements to provide continuous support. Red Cross response to emergency situations was highly efficient; we were able to process each man departing on emergency leave within four hours after notification to him of his emergency situation at home. The magnitude of support provided is shown below:

AVERAGE MONTHLY ASSISTANCE

Emergency Compassionate Leaves Granted	172
Problem Areas Researched	780
Counseling Services Provided	440
Financial Aid	\$9,490

The 25th Infantry Division and 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division were graced by a group of young ladies whom we naturally held in high esteem — the "Donut Dollies". These courageous girls planned and executed many excellent group activity programs, made informal visits, offered many cheery smiles and a stimulating dash of femininity at all of the fire support bases within our area of operations. Each calendar quarter these girls, nine of them, averaged 1,000 visits and traveled an aggregate of approximately 10,000 miles to make their presence felt. They conducted many informal programs: Christmas carols at each fire support base, weekly visits to our hospital wards, receptions for high school graduates, to name but a few. This very special group was well known, respected and admired by all.

I cannot say too much for their splendid contributions.

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The Institutional Memory Within a Fluid Personnel Situation

About 1800-1900 replacements came into the Division each month while about the same number departed. This meant that approximately 3600 soldiers were either coming or going every thirty days. Although we learned fairly well to minimize these dislocations, in terms of continuity and teamwork, we did notice that the institutional memory within the division did not extend beyond a two-month period where one could have the confidence that policies enunciated earlier were still reasonably well understood and observed. Accordingly, all leaders in the chain of command had to make a conscious effort to restate policies and to repeat standing instructions frequently. Unless he did this, the unit commander could not assume that everyone had the word. As a means of facilitating the institutional memory, I encouraged each battalion commander to maintain continuity files, so that succeeding key personnel might have a ready point of reference for getting on top of their jobs early. In this file were kept significant items of policy guidance and procedure.

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Logistics

The 25th Division had outstanding logistical support from the Saigon Support Command. One of the outstanding attitudes that I noticed during this period was a desire on the part of each logistician to support this command—at all echelons. The performance of each, in every category, in supporting the 25th Infantry Division is worthy of the highest praise.

We handled our logistical affairs in this way:

Supply: Supplies were provided to division units on an area basis by DISCOM at Cu Chi Base Camp and 1st Logistical Command direct support units at Tay Ninh and Bearcat. Division forward support elements at Tay Ninh, Dau Tieng and Bearcat, coordinated the distribution of supplies and equipment to units of the 1st and 2nd Brigades. The S&T Battalion provided Class VII (major end items) to all organic and attached units from Cu Chi Base Camp and through the forward support elements at other locations. Back-up support for division units in all classes of supply was provided by DISCOM.

Maintenance: Division units received maintenance and repair parts supply support on an area basis. The main direct support unit was located at the division base camp at Cu Chi. Direct support elements were located at Tay Ninh, Dau Tieng and Bearcat. As the support load shifted, maintenance assets were redistributed. Maintenance contact teams provided direct support service at the customer's location. When the tactical situation and equipment priorities dictated, maximum use was made of aircraft to evacuate equipment and transport contact maintenance personnel and critical repair parts.

Transportation: Transportation support, including wheeled vehicles and logistical aircraft (primarily the CH-47), were centrally controlled and allocated by the Division Transportation Officer to subordinate units as required.

Medical: Medical support was provided on an area basis by the 25th Medical Battalion elements located at Cu Chi, Tay Ninh and Bearcat.

Evacuation/Hospitalization: Aeromedical helicopters were the primary means of patient evacuation. Patients requiring care beyond the capability of the unit medical facility were evacuated to 12th Evacuation Hospital at Cu Chi, 24th and 93rd Evacuation Hospitals, Long Binh, or the 45th Surgical Hospital at Tay Ninh. This backup medical service was particularly superb. So were the "dustoff" missions (They were marked by countless acts of valor.).

Services: Salvage, bath, laundry and post exchange services were provided on an area support basis by 25th S&T Battalion and 1st Logistical Command elements to division customers within the division area of operations.

* Aero medical evacuations of wounded soldiers from the battlefield.

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In summary, we were supported royally by the logistical elements of United States Army, Vietnam.

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Statistical Summary of Combat Results

	(EN ELIMINATED)				(WEAPONS)		US	EN ELIM		EN ELIM to US KIA
	KIA	FW	HC	VCI	TOT	SA	CRS	KIA	WPNS	
15-30 Sep	837	68	19	(1)	923	220	9	6	4.0:1	152:1
Oct	1210	114	32	(3)	1356	275	19	32	4.6:1	43:1
Nov	1106	72	41	(17)	1219	312	31	23	3.5:1	53:1
Dec	1049	96	15	(6)	1160	598	35	43	2.0:1	27:1
Jan	1010	67	22	(4)	1099	288	22	32	3.5:1	34:1
Feb	489	36	18	(10)	543	186	12	35	2.8:1	16:1
1-25 Mar	450	27	9	(6)	486	119	12	27	3.7:1	16:1
Total	6151	480	156	(47)	6787	1998	140	198	3.1:1	34:1

KIA - Killed In Action

FW - Prisoner Of War

HC - Hoi Chanh - a rallier

VCI - Viet Cong Infrastructure - a cadre man

SA - Small Arms Captured

CRS - Crew Served Weapons Captured

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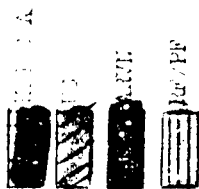
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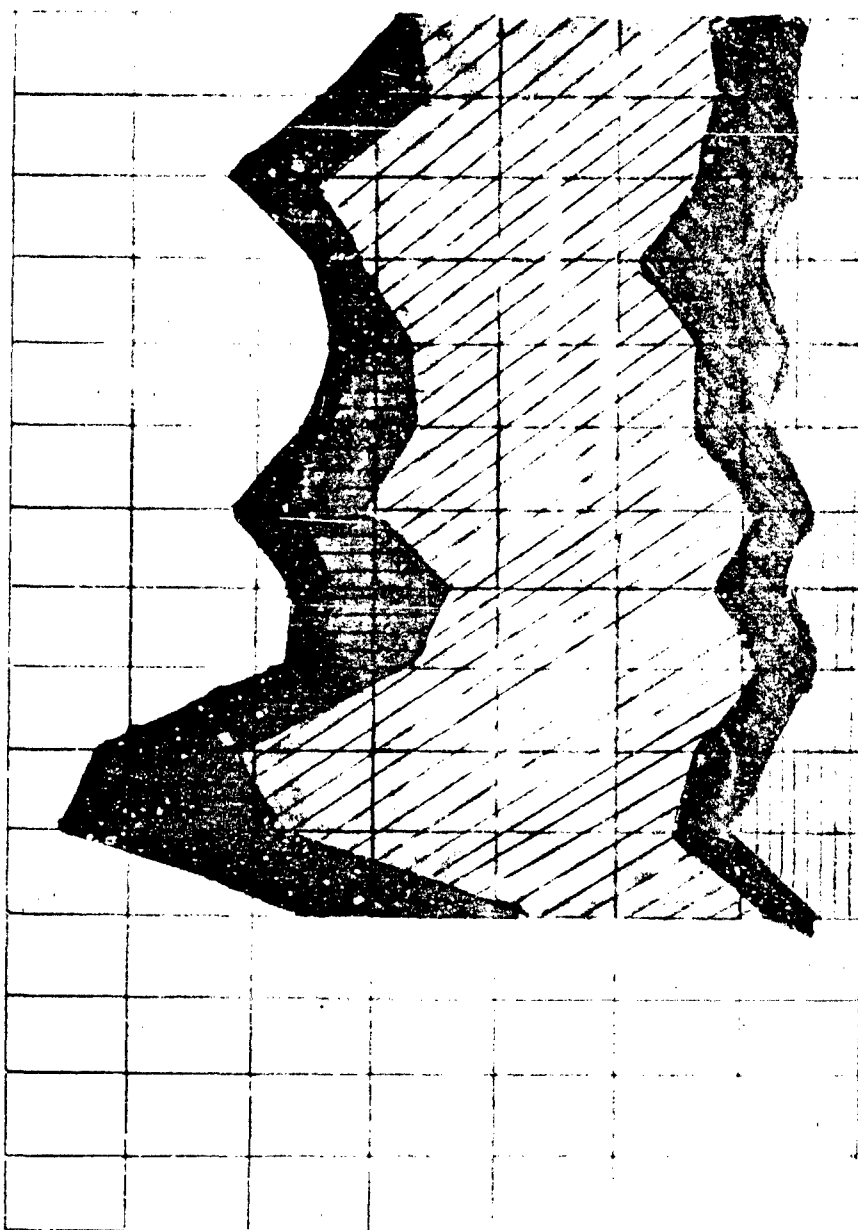
25th INF DIV TACT. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS SUMMARY

PERIOD 01-30 Nov 69

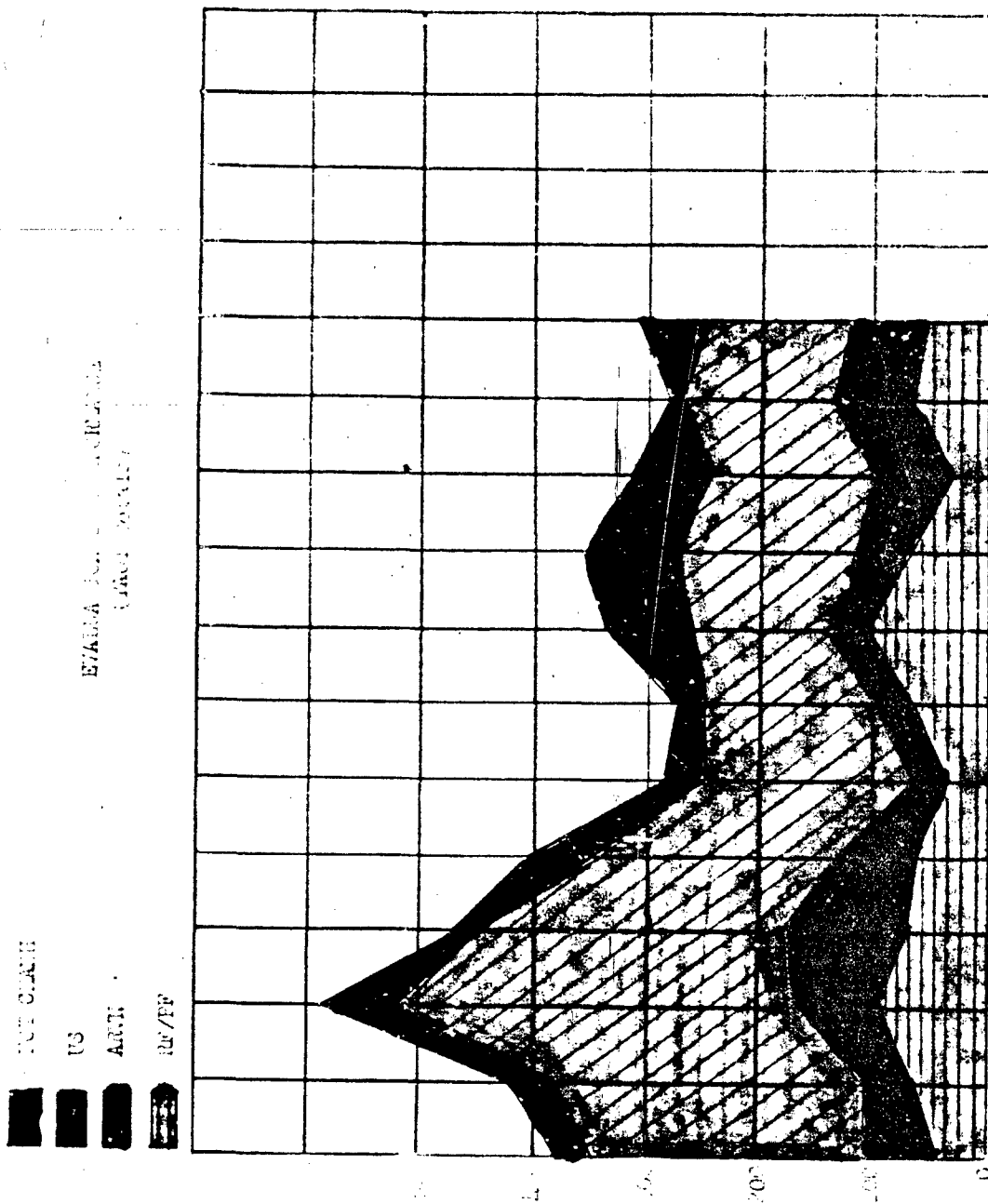
DAY NIGHT	CO EQUIVALENT OPERATIONS											
	GND RECON	AM	AMBUSH	OTHER	TOTAL	VC/AVA KIA (BC)	PW	VCI	HC	WTE		
25th Inf Div	534 0	253 0	0 245	6 548	793 793	553 553	72	(17)	41	343		
ARVN	656 13	95 0	0 621	48 186	799 820	82 48	41	(5)	34	104		
RF	1510 19	57 0	1129	130 110	1698 1558	86 111	33	(2)	169	134		
PF	575 4	6 0	0 889	98 80	679 973	9 28	3	(0)	5	23		
CIDG	200 6	4 0	0 195	0 0	204 201	2 8	0	(0)	0	1		
TOTAL	3475 42	415 0	1 3379	282 924	4173 4345	732 748	149	(24)	249	605		



50.00 100.00 150.00 200.00 250.00 300.00 350.00 400.00 450.00 500.00 550.00 600.00 650.00 700.00 750.00 800.00 850.00 900.00 950.00 1000.00



ENEMY ELIMINATED























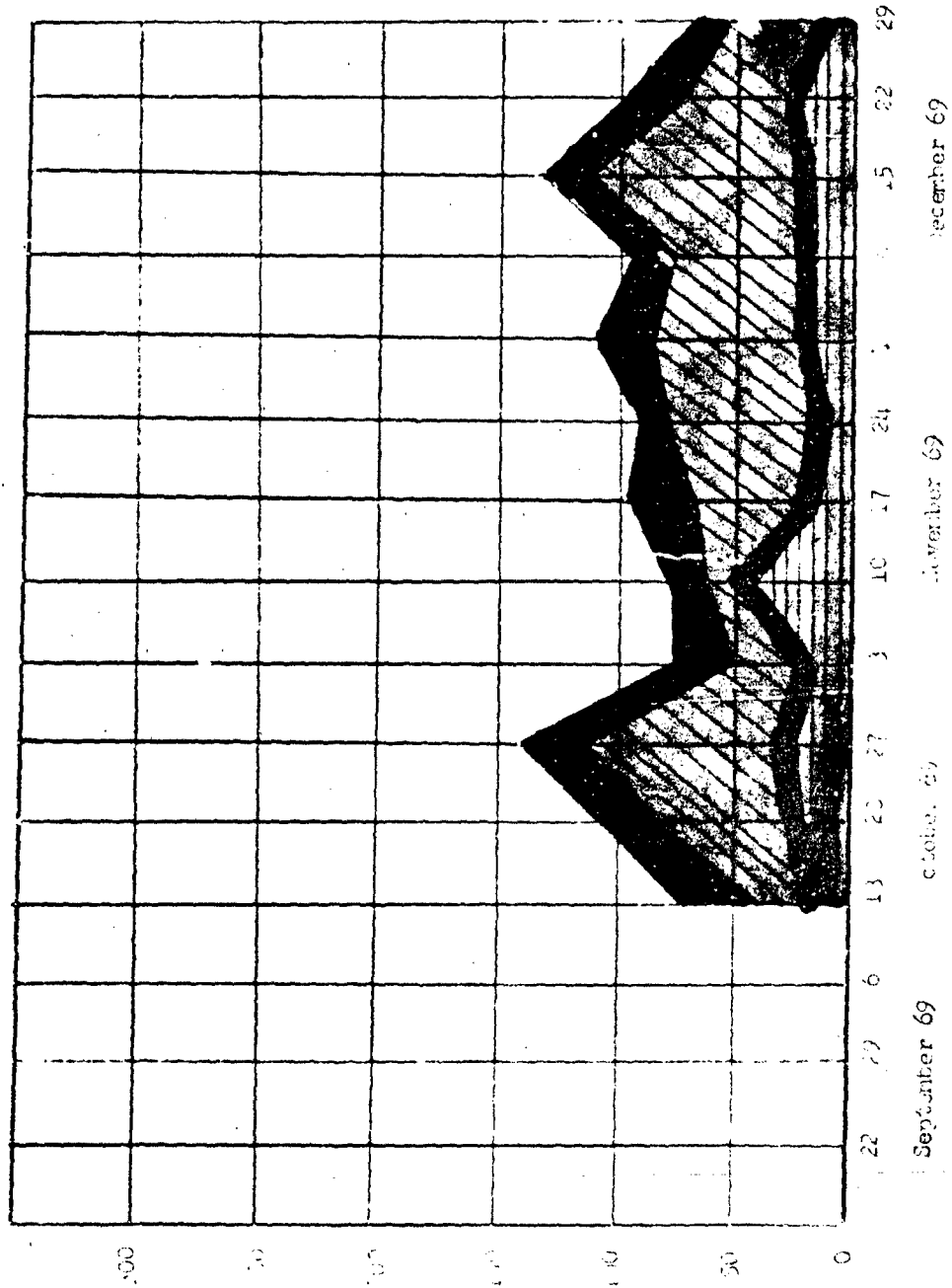
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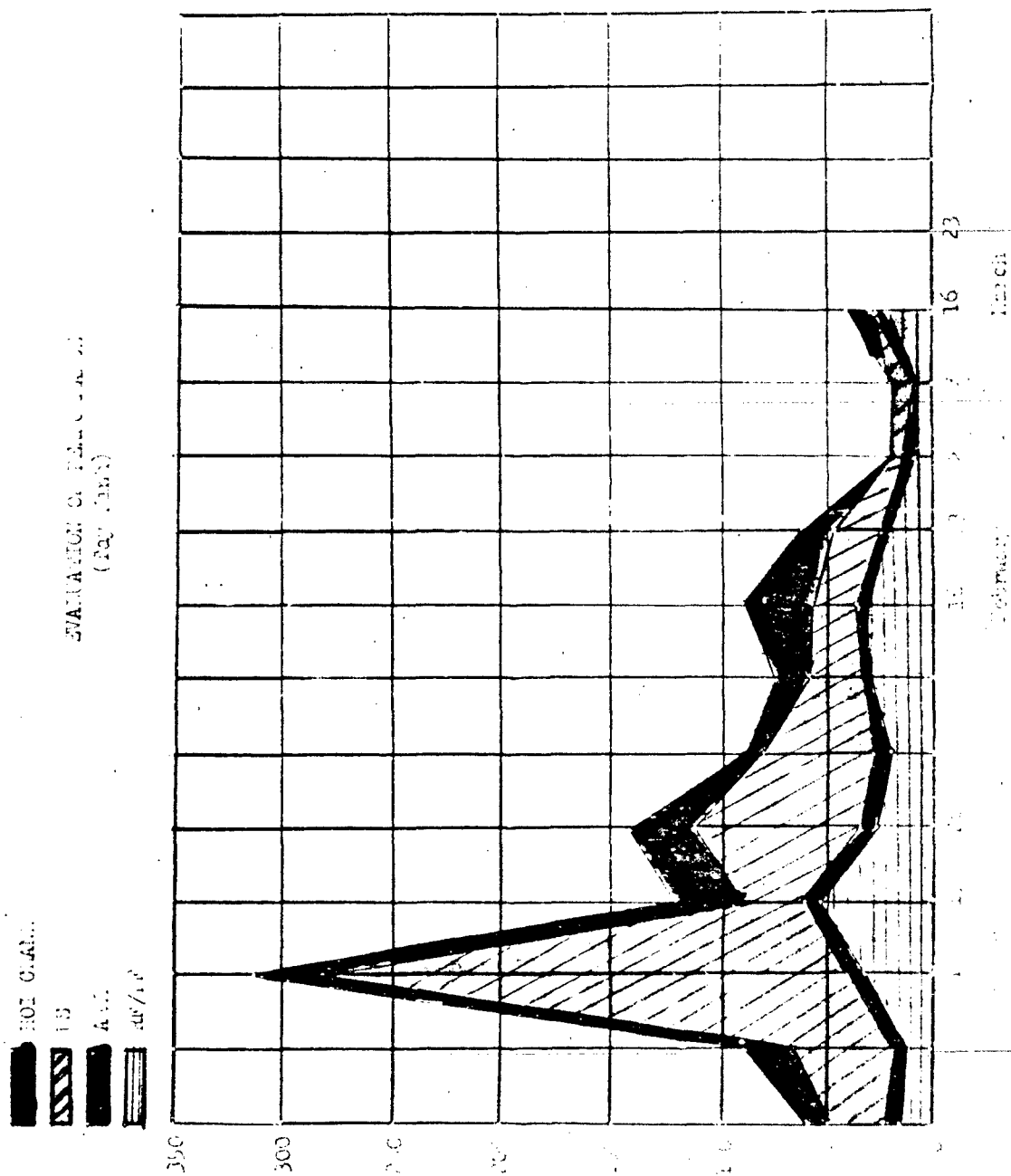
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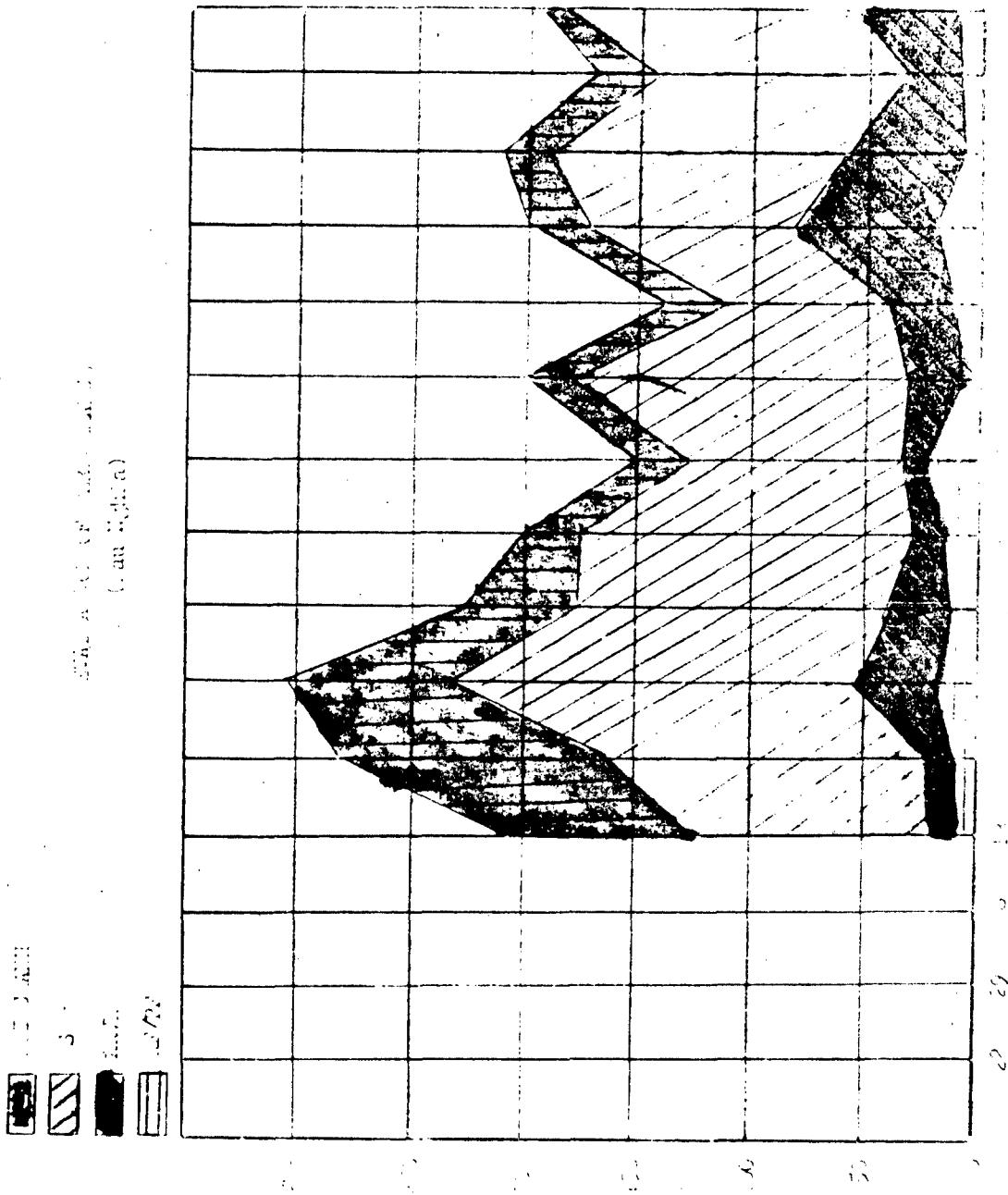























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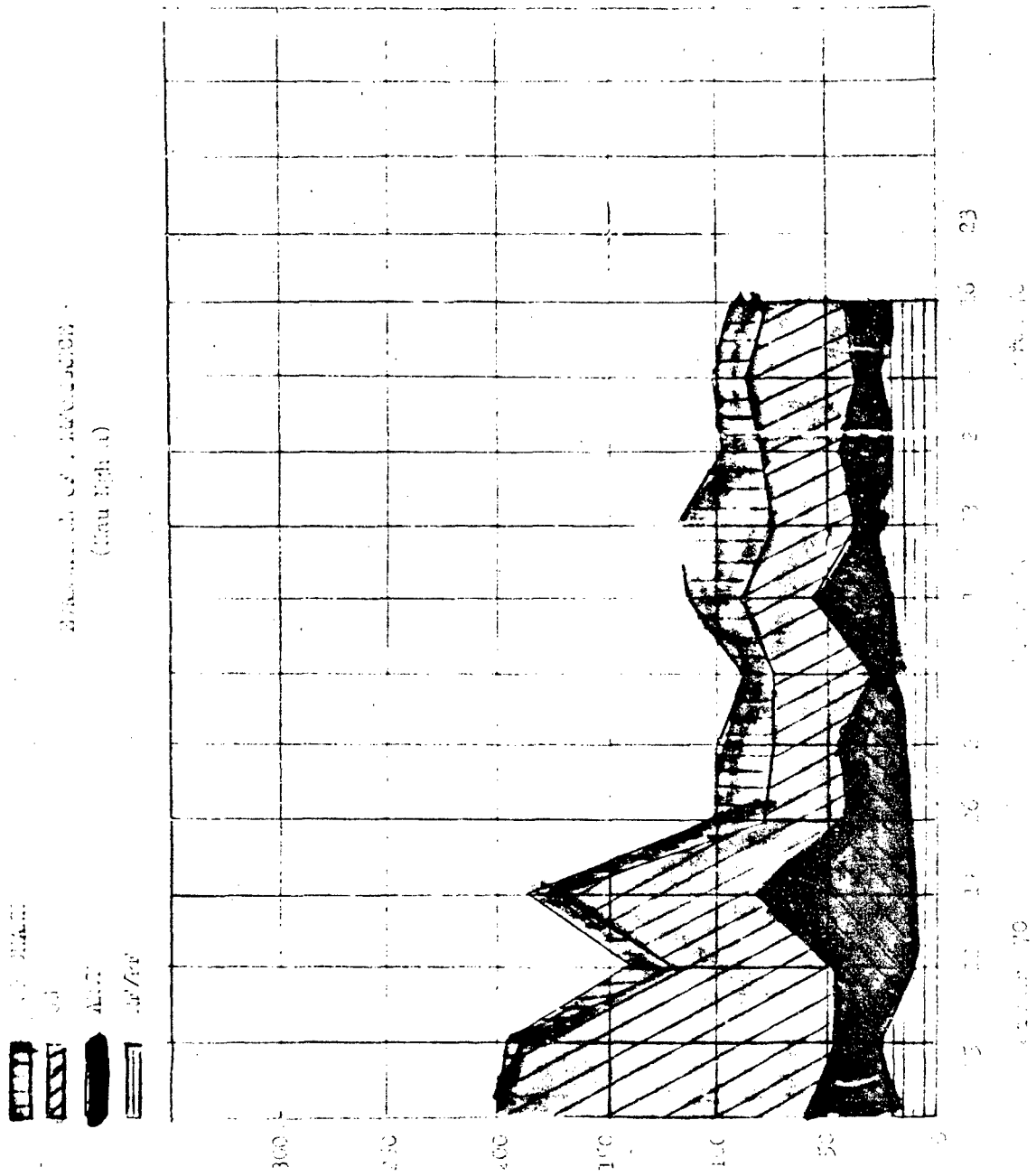


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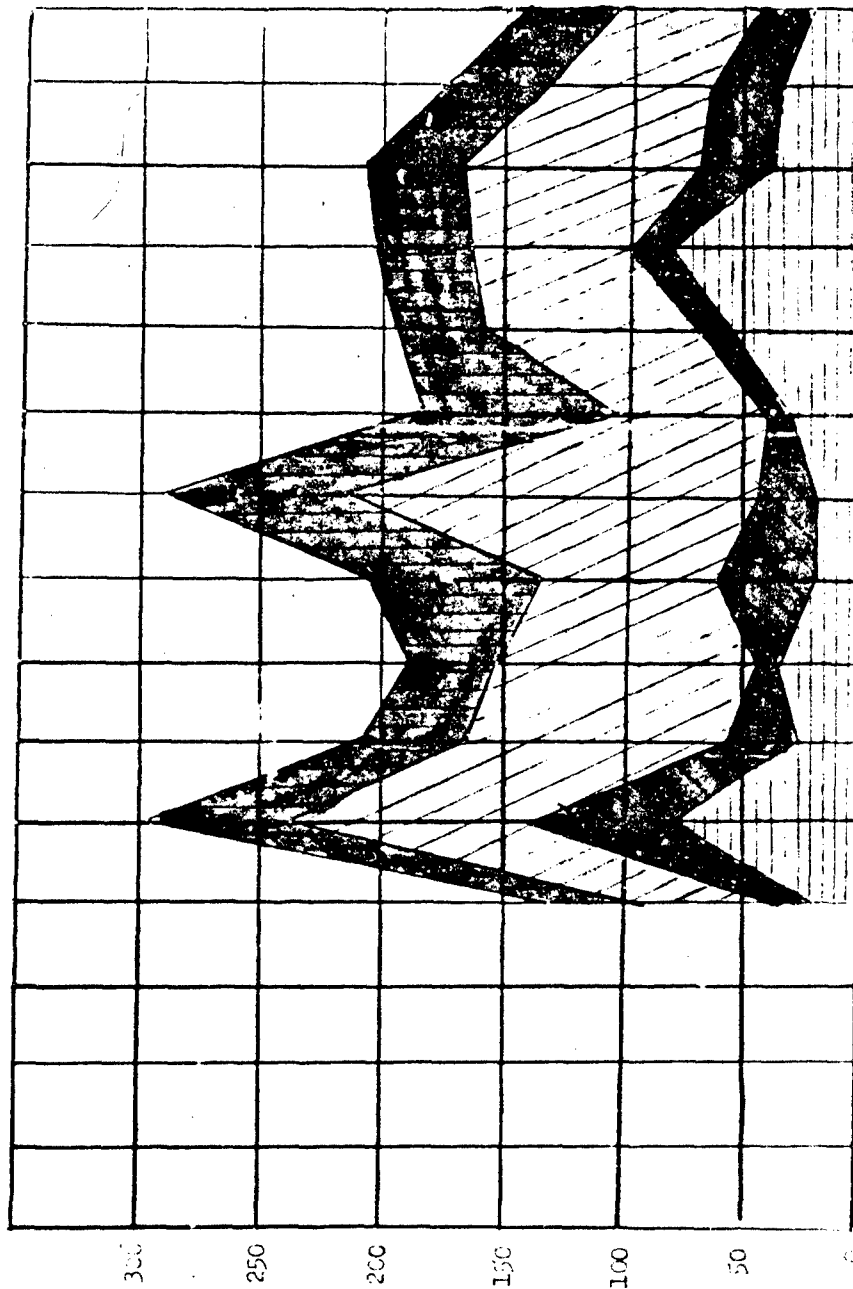
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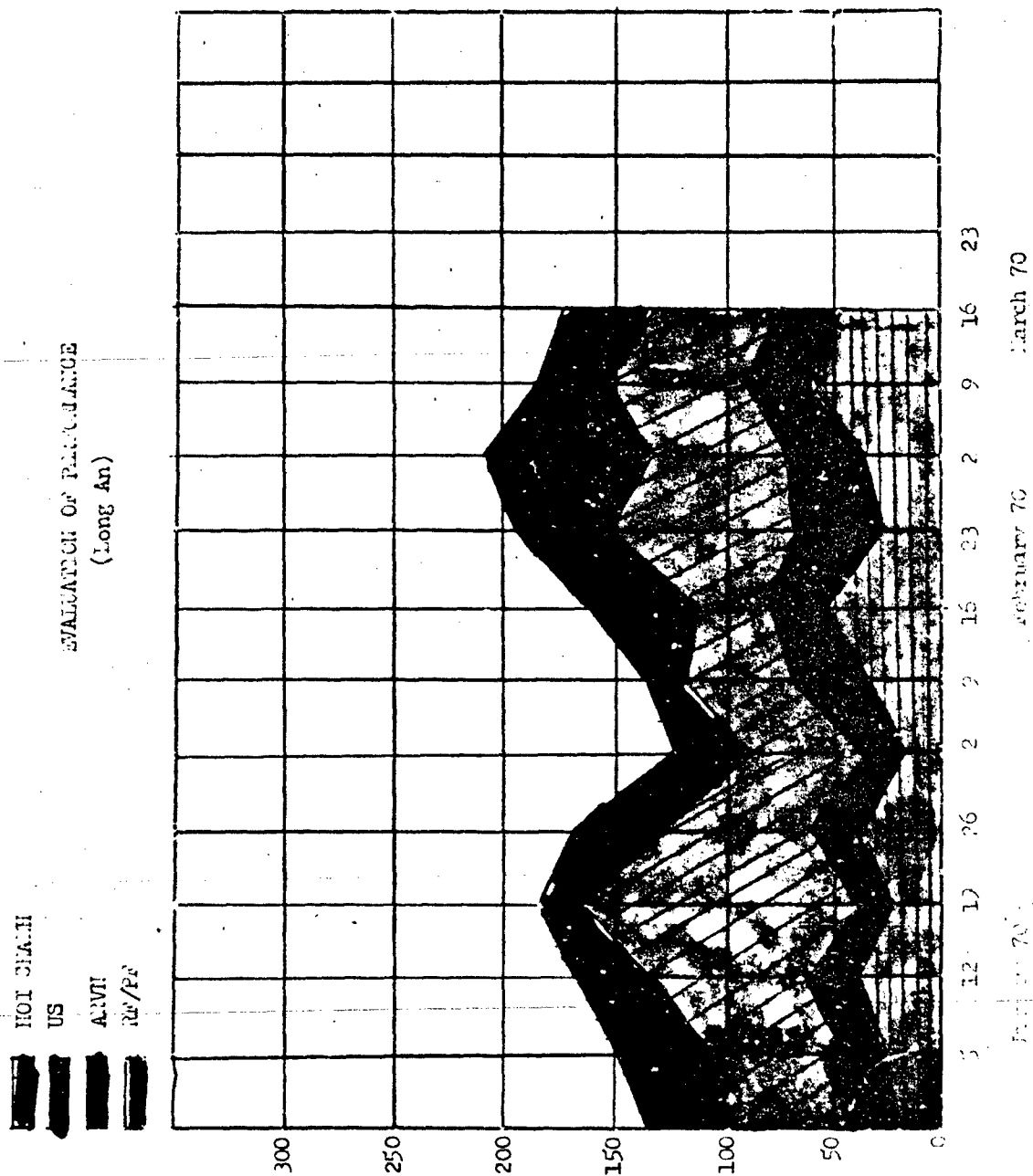
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Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
HQ, OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310		CONFIDENTIAL	
3. REPORT TITLE		2b. GROUP	
Senior Officer Debriefing Report: MG Harris W. Hollis		4	
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Senior Officer Debriefing Report, 15 September 1969 to 2 April 1970.			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
MG Harris W. Hollis			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
1 April 1970		73	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
b. PROJECT NO.		70B015	
N/A			
c.		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
d.			
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			

70

DD FORM 1473
1 NOV 66

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Security Classification